

Exploring Views on Financial Health and Organisational Culture within Schools Using a Mixed Methods Approach: Teesside University Research Findings

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Summary

This report outlines the findings of research into insights around financial health and organisational culture and leadership in schools. It also shares preliminary findings into perceptions of what gamification techniques may be effectively embedded into the prototyped financial efficiency platform under development by Pebble (SF Software Limited).

Highlights of the report include:

- A literature review into theoretical and existing research-based insights into the English educational sector, the financial health of English schools, participatory research approaches, and principles of gamification
- A methodological chapter that provides the context and rationale for the use of pilot surveys, focus groups, and interviewing techniques to support the research approach
- Findings from a pilot survey conducted between October 2016 and January 2017
- Findings from both focus groups with school business managers, which took place in November 2016 and February 2017 at the Darlington campus of Teesside University
- Findings from phone interviews conducted with headteachers in February 2017
- A discussion chapter which synthesises the findings from the research activity and provides recommendations for gamification and related design considerations into the wireframing and prototyping of the financial efficiency platform

Table of Contents

Summary	2
Introduction	6
Chapter 1. Literature Review.....	8
English education sector challenges and financial health	8
Designing Gamification Techniques in an Educational Management Tool	12
Emergence of gamification	12
Research into Effectiveness and Impact of Gamification	14
Chapter 2. General Methodology	17
Surveys	17
Participants	17
Design and distribution of survey	17
Data analysis	18
Focus Groups and Interviews	18
Designing focus groups	20
Designing research approaches with gamification in mind: play and games	22
Headteacher interviews	25
Wireframe testing	27
Chapter 3. Survey	28
Introduction	28
Results	28
Discussion.....	31
Conclusion	32
Chapter 4. Focus Group 1	33
Introduction	33
Results	33
Session 1'	33
Session 2	40
Session 3	44
Participatory Games/Play Session.....	48
Discussion.....	51
Overall observations	51
Wireframing design considerations	51
Conclusion	52

Chapter 5. Headteacher interviews	53
Introduction	53
Results'	54
Theme 1: Leadership and organisational culture	54
Theme 2: Financial Health	60
Theme 3: Digital Technology	63
Discussion.....	67
Overall observations	67
Wireframing Design Considerations	68
Conclusion	69
Chapter 6. Focus Group 2.....	70
Introduction	70
Results	71
Session 1'	71
Session 2.....	75
Session 3	80
Participatory games/ Play session (Session 4).....	87
Session 5.....	89
Scenarios.....	90
Discussion.....	92
Wireframing considerations	92
Conclusion	92
Chapter 7: Discussion of findings and design considerations	94
Introduction	94
Reflecting on the methodological approaches	94
Survey	94
School business manager focus groups	95
Headteacher interviews	97
Design and wireframing considerations	97
Bridging observations from play and games toward design considerations.....	98
Wireframing design considerations.....	99
Chapter 8: Conclusion.....	102
Appendices	105
Appendix A. OCAI questionnaire	105
Appendix B. Enhanced survey developed by Ewan Ingleby	108

Appendix C. Questions and Themes Explored During the Focus Groups with School Business Managers and Phone Interviews with Headteachers.....	110
Focus Group 1 (November 2016).	110
Headteacher interviews (February 2017).....	111
Focus Group 2 (February 2017)	112
Appendix D: Transcription of Focus Group at Pebble (SF Software Ltd.)	114
Session1	114
Session 2.....	117
Session 3.....	122
References.....	127

Introduction

Good financial health in schools is critical to good business management and to good outcomes for pupils. However, the Department for Education estimates that schools have to save £1.3 billion in procurement spending and £1.7 billion in workforce spending by 2019-2020. This implies that there is a 8% reduction in per-pupil funding for mainstream schools between 2014-2015 and 2019-2020 (National Audit Office, 2016). The question was raised whether all schools have the capacity and / or skills to manage these reductions in their funding as effectively as they could.

Therefore, a competition was funded by Department for Education (DfE) to find innovative and practical new ways to engage and enable schools to become more financially efficient, healthy and sustainable. The application written by SF Software Ltd. and Teesside University, in cooperation with the Association of School and College leaders (ASCL), was one of the two winners of this competition and received funding to work out their original proposal. The project proposed to develop a Virtual Learning Platform prototype to support the improvement of financial health within schools and enable them to save 2% efficiency savings year on year.

The aim of the research phase of the project was to develop a theoretical and applied base for the Virtual Learning platform and better understand the needs for the schools. An innovative part of this project was the focus on the application of gamification in the education sector, because recent moves toward improved user engagement with technology has led to the application of gamification into a wide range of applications and processes. What is gamification? It is the high school physics teacher who structures all learning and assessment along the lines of an online multiplayer computer game, called Classcraft (Ward, 2013). It is the retailer who creates a loyalty card that provides more rewards and privileges based on how active the customer is (Marks and Spencer, 2017) or the computational chemistry citizen science project that creates a game platform to encourage gamers to analyse their data. (Das and Trueille, 2014) All of these examples represent a move toward designing outcomes within non-game contexts using elements of games and play, so-called *gamification*. Gamification and participatory research techniques are emerging areas of academic study and wider application in wider contexts; their

application in concert with each other is a lesser understood or applied area, however (Seaborn and Fels, 2015).

The first chapter of this report includes a literature review that discusses the current English education sector challenges and explores the use of gamification techniques within research, organisational and applied technological contexts. In the second chapter, the methodological approaches used in the research are described. Chapter 3 includes the results of a survey that was performed to get basic knowledge of the participants' values and outlooks with respect to the organisational culture within schools and the financial health of schools. Chapter 4 describes the first focus group. The aim of this focus group was to explore and document responses to issues relating to leadership and organisational culture in schools: financial health; digital technologies; and approaches play and gamification. Chapter 5 describes the phone interviews held with headteachers. The aim of Chapter 5 was similar to Chapter 4's aim: to explore different key themes with headteachers: organisational culture and leadership; financial health of their respective school or college; digital technology and social media; and gamification. Chapter 6 describes the second focus group. The aim of this focus group was twofold: to further explore issues raised from the previous focus group (Chapter 4) and from the survey completed between October 2016 and January 2017 (Chapter 3); and to react to conceptual ideas behind the design of the financial efficiency platform. Chapter 7 discusses the results of Chapters 3 – 6 and also critically reflects on the methodological issues related to our approach. Chapter 8 is the final chapter of this report and summarises all other chapters, before ending with a conclusion.

Chapter 1. Literature Review

This chapter lays the framework for the research undertaken in this project through a contextualisation of existing academic research literature relating to current challenges in the English education sector; the financial health of schools; and gamification.

English education sector challenges and financial health

The research project is framed by a background that draws attention to the financial pressures that schools in England are facing today (www.academytoday.co.uk; www.ascl.org.uk; www.nao.org.uk; www.insidegovernment.co.uk; www.tes.com). A combined survey by ATL (the Association of Teachers and Lecturers) and the NUT (National Teachers Union) in 2017 has identified that funding pressures have forced schools to resort to new ways of raising money. This survey revealed that 44% of schools 'rent out' school buildings and one-sixth of schools now ask parents for money (www.tes.com). In the survey of 1,200 teachers, support staff, and heads, 76% of staff said that their budget had been cut this year. 93% of the respondents said that they were 'pessimistic' about their school's funding over the next three years. 71% of the secondary school respondents said that their school had cut teaching posts and 50% of the total number of respondents revealed that they have had to increase class sizes. The survey also revealed that 41% of schools have had to cut their SEN (Special Educational Needs) provision. The statements by the respondents reveal the challenges to funding schools in England in 2017. In the survey, a primary teacher from Essex stated that: 'over the last two years, the ethos of the school has changed from being based on a family atmosphere to being driven by cost-cutting' (www.tes.com).

Another teacher referred to having to teach a 'master class' of 64 pupils (www.tes.com). According to the survey, schools are being forced to go to increasing lengths to raise money to cope with funding shortfalls. Almost half (49%) of the respondents said their school has asked parents to pay for items to help their child's education, including textbooks or art and design materials (www.tes.com). 14 of these respondents said that their school asks for over £20 a month. The survey was published on the first day of ATL's annual conference in Liverpool, in April 2017, where five motions on the subject of funding are to be debated. Mary Bousted, ATL's

general secretary, warned that: ‘unless the government finds more money for schools and fast, today’s school children will have severely limited choices’ (www.tes.com). Kevin Courtney, from the NUT, criticised the government by saying that: ‘our government must invest in our country and invest in our children’ (www.tes.com). The TES (Times Educational Supplement) noted that a DfE (Department for Education) spokeswoman responded to this particular sector challenge by saying: ‘the government has protected the core schools budget in real terms since 2010, with school funding at its highest level on record at almost £41 billion in 2017-18 – and that is set to rise, as pupil numbers rise over the next two years, to £42 billion by 2019-20’ (www.tes.com). Despite this statement, the pressure on school budgets appears to be a key educational challenge in 2017.

The challenges to school funding are also part of the broader context of educational challenges in schools in England. This is revealed by Selwyn (2011, cited in Ingleby 2015) who draws attention to some of the ambitious educational policies of the Coalition and Conservative governments in England from 2010. These policies have included reforming the examination system and increasing the number of academy schools (Ingleby 2015). In this background contextualisation of education in England, some of the challenges that are present in the English education system are revealed by exemplifying the consequences of the introduction of academy schools in England.

The academy schools are grounded in what Selwyn (2011, 365, cited in Ingleby 2015) refers to as ‘an ambition of absence’. As opposed to championing the merits of aligning schools to local authority control, the academy schools are based on encouraging self-regulation (Machin and Veroit 2011). There is a palpable sense that almost anything is possible within the academy (or ‘free’ schools). The schools will ideally regulate their own finances but Machin and Veroit (2011, 2) refer to the ‘controversy’ surrounding the introduction of academy schools in England since 2002. These schools are ‘independent, non-selective, state funded’ and ‘outside the control of local authorities’ (Machin and Veroit 2011, 2). The schools are managed by an independent team of sponsors. The sponsors of the schools ensure that their management is delegated to a largely self-appointed set of governors. Machin and Veroit (2011, 2) note that an academy usually has around 13 governors with seven typically appointed by the sponsor. The ‘controversy’ surrounding the academy

schools can be traced back to this independent arrangement of sponsors. Who are the sponsors? What are they trying to achieve? What sort of curriculum is being introduced? In attempting to promote independence with regards to the curriculum and the financial running of these schools, a number of questions have been asked by academic commentators about these schools. The academics who have explored the consequences of the introduction of these schools in England include Clarke 2014; but also Ball 2010; Caldwell and Harris 2008; Glatter 2013; Greary and Scott 2014; Gunter 2011; Hatcher 2011; Machin and Salvanes 2010; Machin and Veroit 2011; and McCrone, Southcott and George 2011. The 'loose' arrangement of the academy system appears to enable the possibility of the emergence of radical and even threatening curricula (Clarke 2014). As well as a risk of academy schools enabling religious extremism (Clarke 2014), academic researchers have commented on the shifting responsibilities that are made manifest within the academy schools (Gunter 2011). This reveals some of the challenges for us as when are working within the education sector in England. There are pressures on budgets, but some of the policy responses with regards to school education in England appear to have exacerbated the challenges that are being experienced.

In exemplifying this argument, the research that has been completed on academy schools in England outlines that this form of school does allow more autonomy and flexible governance, owing to the changed school structure (Ball 2010; Caldwell and Harris 2008; Glatter 2013; Greary and Scott 2014; Gunter 2011; Hatcher 2011; Machin and Salvanes 2010; Machin and Veroit 2011; and McCrone, Southcott and George 2011). The gradual emergence of academy schools in England since 2002 has, however proved controversial. Their autonomy enables them to have the potential to influence areas of the curriculum such as developing employability skills in young people (Machin and Veroit 2011). On the other side of the debate are the critics of the academy schools who outline that autonomy can exacerbate segregation in society (Ball 2010; Clarke 2014). Machin and Veroit (2011) reveal some of the educational consequences of the autonomy of the academy schools in England. It is argued that academy schools are able to 'sharply increase the quality of their pupil intake' because of this autonomy (Machin and Veroit 2011, 45). This is particularly pronounced in schools that converted to academy status in the early years following their introduction in England in 2002. The consequences for the

schools that are not academies are not however, necessarily 'obvious'. The presence of a new form of school can actually provide 'significant beneficial effects' for the schools that are not academies (Machin and Veroit 2011, 46). The argument runs that a new form of competitor school provides incentives for the schools that are not academies. This can lead to improvements in their educational performance. Machin and Veroit's (2011) findings help to explain why academy schools in England have increased in number since their introduction in 2002. Their autonomy is perceived to be beneficial by some of the educational policymakers in England.

In a wider critique of the forces influencing education in England, Urban (2009) argues that there is an absence of educational philosophy across the sector. There is neither a Rudolf Steiner nor a Maria Montessori informing English educational contexts. Instead, a void is filled with initiatives that are based on political and socio-economic imperatives. The academy schools are one such example of an educational initiative that is influenced by political philosophy. This reveals some of the challenges existing within schools in England today and the financial pressures on schools that have been revealed in 2017 draw attention to a sector of education that is in need of help and support. The research in this project is based on this principle of seeking to be helpful and developmental to schools in England.

Designing Gamification Techniques in an Educational Management Tool

Emergence of gamification

Gamification is a relatively new term that describes when the principles of play and games are adapted or co-opted into what are seen as non-game contexts to generate effective or positive outcomes. The term itself is believed to have been first coined in 2002, though its wider use did not emerge until around 2010. (Burke, 2014) This subsequently led to a positive promotion of the ideals of gamification and the ability of games and elements of games to transform everyday lives (McGonigal, 2011). While principles that fit under the concept of gamification have been in wide use for a long time, particularly when looking at work in education, early childhood development studies, and animal behaviour (Sutton-Smith, 1997), its application across widening areas is newer, having emerged predominantly in the 21st century. One could argue, however, that beyond the aforementioned areas, far earlier examples of gamification did exist in varied non-game contexts, such as retail. Earliest examples of game-like qualities in retail or business contexts include such as American Airlines' frequent flier program, launched in 1981, and Tesco's Clubcard, which was launched in 1993 and rewarded shoppers with points. (Measure, 2003)

In the 2010s, gamification has seen an increasing adaptation and engagement from a wide spectrum of industries, including business and retail (Hofacker et al, 2016; Conaway and Garay, 2014; Hamari, 2013; Palmer et al, 2012; Deterding et al, 2011); education, particularly as a pedagogical tool (Kingsley and Grabner, 2015; de-Marcos et al, 2014; McGonigal, 2011); city planning (Duggal, Gupta, and Ammu, 2016); and health care (Koivisto and Hamari, 2014; Rao, 2013). Gamification has also been utilised as a technique in non-game contexts to encourage community building, to meet institutional challenges, and facilitate organisational cohesion through the use of game design principles (Hamari, Koivisto & Sarsa, 2014; Hamari & Koivisto, 2013; Deterding, 2012). In addition, the use of gamification has been explored in other contexts, such as its use to promote creativity (Kalinauskas, 2014) and positive behaviour change in depression sufferers (Rao, 2013). Gamification has also successfully generated efficiencies across third sector and governmental contexts (Kim et al, 2015).

Gamification—in its most current iteration—has been defined in varying ways, with no commonly agreed concept. Seaborn and Fels describe it as ‘the use of game mechanics instead of a fully-fledged game in non-game context’ (2015: 16); Palmer *et al* (2012: 54) define gamification as ‘taking the essence of games—fun, play, transparency, design and challenge—and applying it to real world challenges rather than pure entertainment’; and Burke (2014: 4) defines it as “the use of game mechanics and experience design to digitally engage and motivate people to achieve their goals.” Burke continues that *game mechanics* refers to the components that make up a game, such as points or a leaderboard, whilst *experience design* refers to the ‘journey’ (4) that players take whilst engaging with the gameplay elements (the story, the quests). This definition provides a helpful means to appreciate the process and components of gamification, but does not account for those contexts where the outcomes are varied or emergent for those involved—the making of meaning for the user. Perhaps the most flexible, yet outcome-specific definition is that offered by Huotari and Hamari (2012: 22) where they define gamification as “a process of enhancing a service with affordances to support user’s overall value creation.” This definition, and its orientation toward the user and the way in which gamification can facilitate a process of ‘value creation’ for those who are accessing service, provides the most helpful framework from which to consider this research project as it places the user at the centre of the process of gamification.

Both Hofacker *et al* (2016) and Conaway and Garay (2014) provide a series of components of gamification as a way of better framing its scope beyond a definition only. Conaway and Garay break it down into four major areas, namely progress paths, feedback and reward, social connection, and attractiveness. Hofacker *et al* describe thematic congruence (story), mechanics (rewards), aesthetics (the interface), and technology as being critical components of effective gamification, a process they feel is improved by allowing “researchers to utilize the fundamental elements of game design” (34). These taxonomies are similar and provide a helpful way to draw out areas of gamification, though Conaway and Garay specify the notion of *social connection*, which further expands the idea of gamification and aligns well with the intended outcomes of the financial management tool.

It seems unsurprising that gamification as a concept has been difficult to frame and conceptualise (Seaborn and Fels, 2015), as this lack of clarity has also been

lamented in the wider research into games and play themselves (Sutton-Smith, 1986; Juul, 2005). Whilst a number of theorists and historians have grappled with framing a concept of play and games that resonated with its pervasive complexity, particularly in relation to its function as a cultural artefact and representation (Huizinga, 1938; Caillois, 1958; Sutton-Smith, 1986), this has not necessarily worked effectively with the ways in which notions of play and games have evolved. This has been particularly germane in the light of advancing technology and the emergence of the Internet in the latter part of the 20th century.

A contemporary approach recommended by games theorist Jesper Juul (2005) provides a framework by which to consider games and play that are increasingly pervasive and designed to be persistent (never-ending) ‘a rule-based formal system with a variable and quantifiable outcome, where different outcomes are assigned different values, the player exerts effort in order to influence the outcome, the player feels attached to the outcome, and the consequences of the activity are optional and negotiable.’ This allows for a consideration of games and play that are on the one hand malleable and evolving due to technological and cultural interests yet focused on key areas that constitute a game: rules-based system, outcomes-orientation, attachment, and negotiable consequences.

Research into Effectiveness and Impact of Gamification

Not all elements of gamification have been found to be successful in all settings (Kim, 2015), and for some researchers, the scope and application of a widespread range of gamification techniques have not been found to work in all settings or with all demographics (Koivisto and Hamari, 2014). In the case of Rao’s research (2013) into a gamified online community aimed at supporting depression sufferers, she found that the most effective gamification techniques were those focused on building supportive community through empathetic means (Conaway and Garay’s *social connection*) rather than gamification elements focused on adapting games mechanics such as collection or competition (*feedback and reward*). In their research into users of a gamified exercise tool (via the Wii), Koivisto and Hamari (2014) found that age and gender resulted in differing forms and depth of engagement with different gamification elements in the tool. Female users on the whole, they found, reported ‘greater social benefits from the use of gamification’ (179), whilst the younger user found the novel, more playful aspects of the tool more appealing. This

meant that the younger user tended to lose interest faster in the tool as compared to the older user, who was more interested in the social elements. But not all female users were the same, they found: older female users found the gamification tools less easy to use as compared to younger users.

While there is research that indicates previous success in utilizing gamification principles to support largescale public sector initiatives (Kim *et al*, 2015), its implementation in the professional educational sector is less known. Most education-related gamification has been focused on pedagogical approaches and for student-support initiatives. (Kingsley and Grabner-Hagen, 2015; de-Marcos *et al*, 2014; McGonigal, 2011) In addition, in de-Marcos *et al*'s study (2014) looking at the effectiveness of gamification (when compared with social networking) in an online e-learning environment for university undergraduate students, they found that while neither technique had good participation levels, that gamification (and social networking) showed improved results among students in “terms of academic achievement for practical assignments”, though the traditional e-learning approaches were superior in terms of assessing knowledge. Marcos *et al*, make a stern warning against using solely gamification techniques in educational environments at the cost of what they refer to as ‘sound pedagogy’:

‘Exactly in the same way that the motto “build it and they will come and learn” proves to be wrong for e-learning, similar dictums like “socialize it and they will participate” or “gamify it and they will be motivated” seem to be equally flawed simply because they are ignoring the necessity of an underlying sound pedagogy.’ (91)

This warning is echoed by Seaborn and Fels (2014), who conducted a systematic survey of the existing body of literature looking at gamification in human-computer interaction contexts. They argue that in the absence of a concrete theory informing current gamification practices and a widely varied range of components considered to be gamification, that gamification itself “may to be more usefully presented as a subset of a larger effort to improve the user experience of interactive systems through gameful design.” (14) This larger effort, focused on the user and encouraging participation, could, they argue, improve the consistency of gamification and allow for more insight. They also promote relying on a hybridized approach to

understand which elements of gamification are effective in which contexts and advocate a continued exploration of its impact in varied environments. This is also supported by Hofacker et al (2016) who recommend against picking ‘gamification elements in a vacuum’ (34) but instead focus on game design elements in conjunction with end-user engagement.

This all suggests that a mindful, user-oriented approach to drawing out gamification elements that will resonate in specific contexts is required for effectiveness. For this project, the ability to identify the *right* game-design elements (e.g. Progress Mechanics i.e. points, leaderboards etc., control, feedback mechanisms, opportunities for collaborative problem solving, social connection, fun, opportunities for mastery etc.) will be critical to ensure successful adoption by the end user.

Chapter 2. General Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the methodological approach undertaken in this research project. The research team undertook a mixed methods research approach, relying predominantly on a qualitative research approach through focus groups and interviews, with some additional quantitative research utilised in the form of online and paper-based pilot surveys. Later work, undertaken by the software development team and leadership at Pebble, involved wireframe testing and user feedback, which further involved the original participants in the focus groups and interview process. The aim of the methodology was to support and facilitate engagement and response during a short-term project phase.

Surveys

The organizational culture assessment instrument (OCAI) assesses six aspects of an organisational culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Each aspect exists of four different statements. People within the organisation are instructed to rate the organisation per statement; both how they rate that statement currently, and how they prefer that statement to be in their organisation. The OCAI is reliable and valid (Cameron & Ettington, 1988; Lavine, et al, 2008; Trice & Beyer, 1993) and was used to get a global overview of the organizational culture within schools.

Participants

Schools that were previously contacted by Pebble (SF Software) and had shown interest in this project were asked to participate voluntarily. Moreover, 30 students in a class of MA in Education students at Teesside University who are currently working as teachers were also asked to participate in this part of the project (total number of participants completing this part of the project by February 2017=131).

Design and distribution of survey

A link to a custom made website that contained all questions of the OCAI was sent to approximately 300 schools and was also distributed under the Education students. Of the contacted schools, it was asked if at least the headteacher, school business manager and head of governors could complete this survey. The Education students completed the survey during part of their taught MA in Education.

The OCAI can be found in Appendix A.

The number of participants completing the online survey was low, with only 22 individual respondents after approximately two months. Also, feedback was received from different schools that in their opinion, the OCAI was not suitable for schools. Similar feedback was received from the MA in Education students at Teesside University.

Consequently, a second survey was developed by Ewan Ingleby. The structure of the survey was based on the recent published survey by the Association of School and College leaders (ASCL) (ASCL School Leaders Survey, 2016) ¹ and the questions in the survey were based on the work of Coffield (2006) and Gibb (1993). The survey aimed to explore the four following themes in schools:

1. Are schools in England driven by results?
2. Is there an awareness of 'enterprise education'?
3. Is there a keen focus on pastoral development?
4. Is a hierarchical leadership structure 'the norm' in schools in England?

The complete second survey can be found in Appendix B.

The same strategy was as with the OCAI used to distribute the second online survey. The link to this survey was sent to approximately 800 schools. A total of 49 participants completed the second survey. The 49 participants who had completed this questionnaire by February 2017 included 21 school business managers; 8 headteachers; 4 assistant headteachers; 4 chair of governors; 4 directors of operations; 3 deputy headteachers; 2 school chief executive officers; 2 finance directors; and 1 vice principal. The responses of the MA in Education students were excluded from further analysis to keep the group of participants homogenous.

Data analysis

All questions were analysed with descriptive statistics.

Focus Groups and Interviews

The predominant research approach for this project was in the form of focus groups and, later, interviews. Both methods were shaped to draw out insights around core themes of concern to the research team: financial health in schools; schools' organisational culture and leadership; and notions of gamification and engagement

¹ https://www.ascl.org.uk//index.cfm?originalUrl=news-and-views/news_news-detail.survey-shows-school-budget-concerns-have-reached-crisis-levels.html

with digital technology. The team designed and structured its approach using a hybridized design that was underpinned by participatory approaches to draw out personal and professional perspectives through a group and individual sharing process (Baum *et al*, 2006) and shaped to optimise gamification principles (Hamari, Kovisto, and Sarsa, 2014; Kim *et al*, 2015) and sustainable sociality in digital environments (Cockshut, 2012). Insights that helped shape the questions and themes during the focus groups were also drawn from a preliminary group interview conducted with staff members at Pebble in October 2016 (see Appendix D).

Participatory techniques (Baum *et al*, 2006) supported and enabled focus group participation and responsiveness during the research phase of this project and were undertaken during the later interviews as well. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is an umbrella term covering a variety of participatory approaches to *action-oriented research*. Rauch *et al* (2014) define PAR as ‘researchers and participants working together to examine a problematic situation or action to change it for the better’ (1) For decades, advocacy for participatory approaches has been poised against the traditional hierarchy of relationships between the researched and researchers and research and action (Reason and Bradbury-Huang, 2013). The stress is on the process being cyclical in nature. As Rauch *et al* (2014) continue: ‘Researchers and participants identify an issue or situation in need of a change; they then initiate research that draws on capabilities and assets to precipitate relevant action. Both researchers and participants reflect on, and learn from, this action...’ (1) PAR has been used in professional settings to good effect, as noted by Rauch *et al*, ‘action research has been adopted across a range of professions as a means of enhancing professional development through reflection and research informed change.’ (8)

PAR is designed as an adaptable process, shaped around the dynamics of the group and research questions to be explained. As Rauch *et al* (2014) explain: “Together [the researchers and participants] develop context-specific methods to facilitate these cycles.” (1) This approach works particularly well within notions of user engagement, gamification, and professional and personal view and values, where a key element is the social construct. By engaging potential end users in developing insights into the tool, it will achieve one of the primary goals of PAR: initiating and sustaining relationships that are sustained beyond the project design phase itself (Maiter *et al*, 2008). The research phase of the project will then rely on active

engagement with participants during the interview and focus group and will use a combination of structured interviews and unstructured group discussions to generate feedback to be applied during the design phase and later validated and further explored during a subsequent focus group later in the research cycle. In the case of this project, the principles of PAR were designed to work ideally where the participants were guided and supported to generate insights (research), the designers would implement and consider design features based on this input (action), and subsequent focus group activity would allow for both reflection and further action (through the tool prototyping process); further action would take place through testing and providing feedback to designers (wireframing) following the second focus group.

Designing focus groups

The original scope of the project was to conduct a series of three focus groups with one cohort of school leaders (primarily school business managers) over the research lifecycle (between November and March), with the suggestion that the first two focus groups would allow for an exploration of issues and testing of games-related ideas and the final focus group-type activity would likely consist of prototype testing and feedback facilitated over the telephone with Pebble's software developers.

Once the project was launched, however, a decision was made early in the project cycle to expand the scope of the focus group work to include not only the perspective of School Business Managers (SBMs) but to also seek out the perspective of Headteachers. The rationale was that adoption and championing of any financial efficiency digital platform could benefit from the input and backing from across school leadership, and from Headteachers in particular. The plan was, with input from ASCL during the project launch meeting in August 2016, to engage and invite Headteachers (HTs) to participate in a Heads' only focus group during the same month that as the original focus group with SBMs. The decision was also taken to host the HT focus group in a location in the south of England (originally in Leicester, but later arranged by Pebble in Stevenage), whilst holding the original SBM meeting in the north (in Darlington, at Teesside University's The Forge facilities). This, it was proposed, could allow for a more diverse range of perspectives from as many types of roles, schools and colleges and demographic ranges as possible across the five-month research period range. Unfortunately, despite

repeated efforts between October 2016 and February 2017, the focus group series for headteachers did not occur. This is discussed in more detail below (see pages 25-27).

Focus groups were designed to take place across the research phase of the project, namely in November 2016 and February 2017. For the SBM focus group, there were seven school business manager (SBM) participants from the Northwest, Northeast, and Midlands.² There were two (n.2) male participants and five (n.5) female participants. Participants identified anywhere from a few years of work in the educational sector to decades of service. At least two participants mentioned having transitioned from work in other financially facing sectors into education, having come from accountancy and banking. We had participants from all levels of primary and secondary education represented. All participants came from either academy or local authority funded schools. For the second focus group, held in February 2017, the work aimed to continue exploring related themes with the same seven participants were invited to attend, though unfortunately one (female) was unable to attend due to illness. This meant the group comprised of four (n.4) female participants and two (n.2) male participants.

The first focus group explored the following themes with a session-based structure. The first three sessions were a traditional focus group format, whilst the final one was an interactive, participant observation session:

- The **first session**: 'leadership and organisational culture'
- The **second session**: 'exploring financial health and its barriers'
- The **third session**: 'digital technologies and social media'
- The **final session was an interactive play session**: 'exploring perceptions of play and games'

During the second focus group, the structure was designed along similar lines to the first focus group, though it also included a hybrid presentation-focus group format (second session):

- The **first session**: 'leadership and organisational culture revisited'

² During the second focus group, one SBM was unable to attend due to illness, so the total number of participants for SBM focus group 2 was six.

- The **second session**: Ryan Green's presentation, 'envisioning the platform' followed by a short session to facilitate reaction
- The **third session**: 'further response to Ryan Green's presentation' and 'digital technologies and social media'³
- The **fourth session was an interactive play session**: 'further exploring collaborative play'
- The **fifth session**: was a discussion in response to the play and earlier sessions

Methods used

A standard focus group methodological approach was utilised during the first three focus group sessions. These sessions had a facilitator and scribe and all sessions were recorded. A participatory observant approach was applied for the final sessions, where facilitators and observers mingled and played with participants; the session also included a follow-up, recorded discussion with facilitators and observers to reflect on the session. All focus group sessions were recorded and later transcribed for coding purposes.

Analysis conducted

The focus group data was transcribed and initially coded according to areas primarily related to setting/context; defining the situation; respondent perspective; and approaches to people/objects. From this four major thematic areas have emerged: culture/organisational elements; technology/design features; financial health/perceptions; and gamification/social media insights or feedback. Participant observation techniques were used to document and reflect on play session activity.

A further discussion about the efficacy and impact of the focus group model for this research project is included in Chapter 7 (see pp. x-x!).

Designing research approaches with gamification in mind: play and games

This research approach was designed to allow for an exploration of what kind of gamification techniques might work within a schools' financial efficiency platform. A series of games and play activities were designed to facilitate this process. The idea was to use a big, open space with lots of room to move and explore. The research team would make observations during play and record these during and after the sessions.

With insights around gamification being an important contributing factor for the research phase, the work of Koivisto and Hamari (2014) was used to help construct

³ This session was expanded to include four staff from Pebble (SF Software).

insights into intersections between digital technology and engagement with gamification, namely:

- *Network exposure* (motivational effect of size of network)
- *Ease of use* (using system would be free of effort)
- *Social influence* (approval for use of system—peer influence)
- *Reciprocal benefit* (social usefulness—community)
- *Recognition* (social motivation from community recognition)

An adaptation of these themes was used to explore values and motivating factors in user engagement will be used to propose elements of gamification to be used in this tool. This was aimed to largely take place during the planned focus group sessions.

Suggested points to explore around these themes included:

- **Q1 (Network)** How important is a social network (or way to connect to others) when you're using digital tools or online resources?
- **Q2 (Ease of use)** How hard do you find it to learn and adopt new digital tools?
- **Q3 (Social influence)** How likely are you to recommend products to colleagues or friends/family?
- **Q4 (Reciprocal benefit)** Would you find a tool to help you improve your workload and/or financial management useful? How important is it to you (How valuable would you find it) to share your knowledge/insights with colleagues in a similar situation?
- **Q5 (Recognition)** How likely are you to share your activity/achievements via an online product (Facebook)?

This was designed as a helpful structure from which to explore themes during planned focus groups. In addition, insights will be drawn around the notion of end-user motivational factors, particularly in relation to education and financial health in line with Hofacker et al's (2016) recommendation to concentrate gamification exploration around maximising end-user engagement and the principles of participatory research that facilitates reflection-informed change. (Rauch et al, 2014). And finally, an exploration of specific elements of gamification will also be undertaken, segmented into Conaway and Garay's (2014) gamification taxonomy

which proposes four major attributes of gamification: progress paths, feedback and reward, social connection, and attractiveness.

Participatory games/ Play sessions

The aim of these two sessions were to explore and draw out further associations with gamification techniques based on results from the first focus group. One of the FG2 participants had to leave at the outset of this session due to family caring commitments. During the first focus group, small groups (approximately 3-4) rotated between each table and played for up to 15 minutes at the following themed tables: Competitive table, Solo-play table, Collaborative table, and the table of Chance. For the second focus group, the play session involved all participants working on a variety of collaborative-style games. The following is a further description of each gameplay design for either the first focus group (FG1) or the second one (FG2).

Game of chance (FG1)

Participants were given one piece of play money. They had a choice of giving the table facilitator their money in exchange for one of the items on the table (treat size sweets bags or small toy erasers) or they could use the play money to enter a draw for a wrapped prize that the facilitator assured participants was more valuable than any of the items on the table (without telling them what was in it).

Table with solo-play games (FG1)

Participants were invited to play a series of solo-games, completing tasks set by the researcher: a stacking bird game (stack the wooden kiwi birds as tall as possible); a word search game (circle as many as possible on a single puzzle); a tablet-based game called Color Zen (a puzzle game involving eliminating colours until one set colour remains); and a tablet-based game called Spelltower (finding words in a correctly patterned order). The researcher then documented the best performance on each task. The overall highest achiever on all four tasks (and only that achiever) was given a prize. In addition, while there was an overall winner, there were different winners for each type of game.

Table with collaborative games (FG1)

Participants were given two types of collaborative games to play:

- A jigsaw puzzle that they were asked to work on together.
- A cooperative building game, Lift It!, that required two members to together simultaneously (each uses one hand to manage the same lifting tool)

Participants were encouraged to complete tasks and given rewards for taking part.

Table with competitive games (FG1)

Participants were given two types of competitive games to play: the card game *Snap!* and the board game *Connect 4*. The table facilitator (EI) had group members play each other and then declare an outright winner of each game. If there were more than two players, players had to play against each other until there was a single winner. A prize was given to the overall winner only.

Table with expanded game of chance (FG2)

Participants were given a chance to enter a draw for a prize bag (no information shared on the content) for £1. Participants were not told how much the bag was worth or what the money would be used for (profit or charity).

Silent collaborative play: dominoes timed challenge (FG2)

The entire group of participants and Pebble colleagues were invited to participate in the Dominoes Timed Challenge. Given specific limitations, the group had to build a prescribed pattern in a 5-minute limit whilst NOT speaking with each other.

Non-silent collaborative play: timed jigsaw challenge (FG2)

Participants could speak and were then timed to see how fast they could complete a 250-piece jigsaw puzzle together.

Headteacher interviews

The original headteacher (HT) focus group was planned for mid-November 2016, but due to poor numbers and last minute drop-outs of participants, the event was rescheduled for January 10, 2017. It was again postponed for similar reasons to February 1, 2017, though that third attempt (despite an initial contact sent to almost 20,000 schools and further direct calls from the research team to over 300 schools in the Stevenage area) was also cancelled due to last minute drop-outs by participants (due to pressing commitments in their own schools or colleges). As a result, it became clear that the HT focus group would not work in its originally proposed format and the decision was made to conduct a series of phone interviews with the HTs who had originally expressed an interest in attending.

It appeared that whilst a number of HTs (up to 9 at one point) were interested in supporting the research project, their school and leadership commitments made it

hard to attend an entire day. They did appear far more available and willing to participate in 1-hour phone interviews, however.

The interview participants (n=6) are all school or school-facing leaders in a variety of roles: headteachers, a deputy headteacher (who is about to become a headteacher) and a director of operations at an 11-school Academies Trust. One is a recently retired (late 2016) headteacher. All participants interviewed identified as male and identified having at least 15 years of experience working within or alongside a school setting. All participants noted that the school to which they were currently affiliated was not the first school within which they had worked or been affiliated with in a professional, teaching, or school leadership capacity. With the exception of one participant, all participants began their work in schools as teachers and members of the academic staff. Four of the participants worked in schools or colleges located in the southern region of England, whilst the fifth worked in a setting located in the northwest of England, and the sixth worked in a school in the northeast of England.

Running parallel to the topics covered in the focus groups, the themes primarily explored were:

- Organisational culture and leadership qualities
- Financial health
- Digital technology and technological outlook
- Games, play and gamification

Methods used

Due to challenges in convening the focus group due to insufficient numbers, the decision was made to approach each HT to participate in 1-hour phone interviews. Six of the seven originally recruited participants agreed to undertake a phone interview. The interviews were designed to be exploratory in nature, with the participants being asked a series of general questions aimed at exploring key themes: organisational culture and leadership; financial health of their respective school or college; digital technology and social media; and gamification. Due to these being phone interviews there was no way to recreate the play session that took place during the SBM focus group, but a few select questions were raised to explore values, outlooks, and experiences relating to games and gamification.

Analysis conducted

The interview data was transcribed and coded according to areas primarily related to setting/context; defining the situation; respondent perspective; and approaches to people/objects. From major thematic areas emerged, consistent with the SBM focus group: culture/organisational elements; technology/design features; financial health/perceptions; and gamification/social media insights or feedback.

Wireframe testing

At the conclusion of the second focus group and at the end of each interview with the headteachers (n. 13), the participants all agreed to be contacted to support Pebble with any wireframe testing or feedback going forward.

Chapter 3. Survey

Introduction

It has been widely described that it is beneficial to have basic knowledge of participants' values and outlooks before the start of a focus group (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2007; Barbour, 2007). With this information, the focus group can be better structured for an optimal outcome. In this case, it was important to understand the view of headteachers and school business managers on the organisational culture and financial health and efficiency within schools.

Therefore, two surveys were distributed under schools over the country to get a better understanding of the organisational culture and financial health and efficiency within schools. The first survey was the OCAI and the second survey was an improved and more specific to schools version of the OCAI.

The research background to the second survey applied the work of Coffield (2006); Gibb (1993) and Vermunt (2016) to the research area. Coffield (2006) and Gibb (1993) draw attention to the importance of 'enterprise education'. This concept does not refer to being 'entrepreneurial' or seeking to make a profit from education. There is, instead, an emphasis placed on encouraging teachers and learners to think in innovative ways- to 'think outside the box. Vermunt's (2016) work draws attention to the importance of ensuring that we listen to those who are working in education, to open 'a black box' of 'hidden conversations' about education. In our research, we have been informed by a wish to explore what educationalists are saying about 'enterprise education' in England in 2017.

This second survey will be discussed in this chapter, with the aim to get basic knowledge of participants' values and outlooks with respect to the organisational culture within schools and the financial health of schools.

Results

At first, people that completed the survey had to respond to five statements, whether they 'strongly agreed', 'agreed', 'neither agreed/ disagreed', 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statement.

On the statement that a key priority in the school is its strong pastoral focus and an emphasis on meeting the needs of the students and the other individuals who are

associated with the school, 65% of the participants strongly agreed, 33% of the participants agreed and 2% (n = 1) strongly disagreed.

On the statement that a key priority in schools is a continual emphasis on examination and assessment results, 57% strongly agreed, 31% agreed, 8% was neutral, 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

On the statement that a key priority in schools is to maintain a hierarchical organisation and management structure, 4% strongly agreed, 41% agreed, 27% was neutral, 27% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

On the statement that a key priority in schools should be enterprise education, 14% strongly agreed, 55% agreed, 20% was neutral, 8% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

On the statement that the financial health in the school was good, 25% strongly agreed, 40% agreed, 15% was neutral, 17% disagreed and 4% strongly disagreed.

The responses to the statements are also displayed in figure 1.

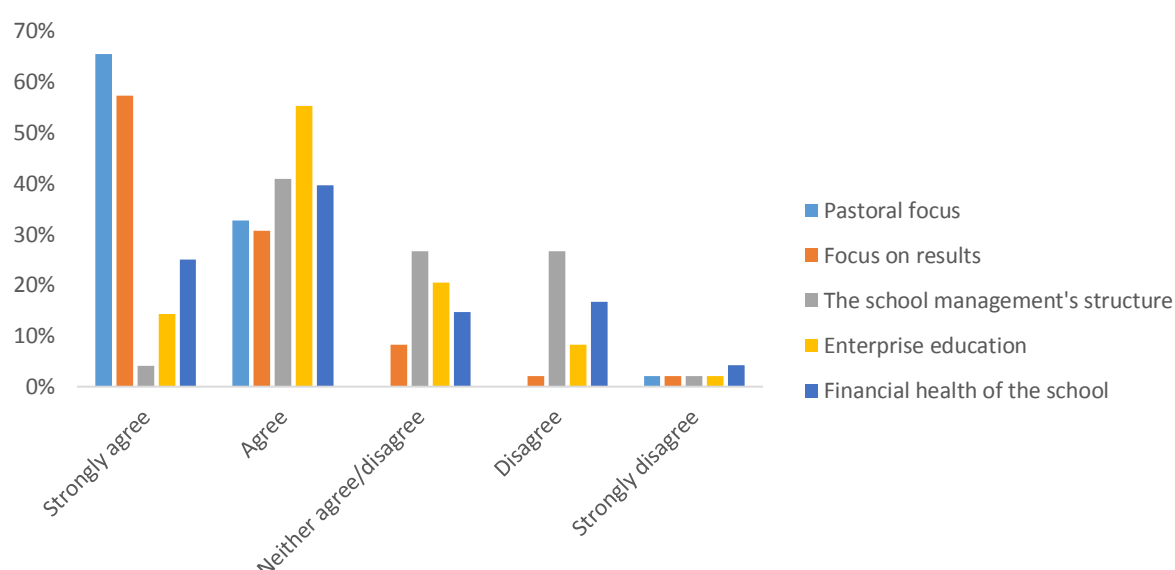


Figure 1. The responses of the participants to the different statements.

Secondly, participants were asked to rank the importance of the following four aspects in their school. (1) The pastoral welfare of everyone associated with the school (2) successful examination / assessment results (3) the school's management structure (4) the importance of enterprise education.

Of the pastoral welfare, 47% ranked it as the most important, 41% as the second most important, 10% as the third most important and 2% as the least important.

Of the focus on results, 51% ranked it as the most important, 31% ranked it as the second most important, 16% as the third most important and 2% as the least important.

Of the school's management structure, nobody ranked it as the most important, 18% ranked it as the second most important, 31% ranked it as the third most important and 51% ranked it as the least important.

Of the enterprise education, 2% ranked it as the most important, 10% as the second most important, 43% ranked it as the third most important and 45% ranked it as the least important.

The rankings are also displayed in figure 2.

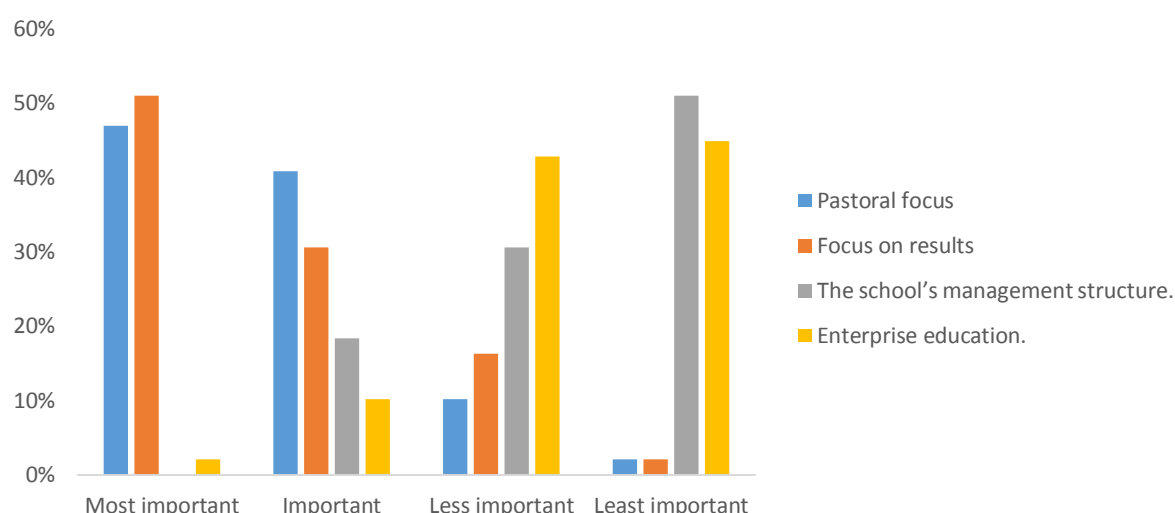


Figure 2. The importance of several statements for the respondent's school

The participants were then asked to state whether the following statements applied to their school.

1. Does a strong pastoral focus make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?
2. Does a continual emphasis on examination/assessment results make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?
3. Does a hierarchical organisation and management structure make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?

4. Does enterprise education make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?

All participants agreed that a strong pastoral focus made a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture.

53% of all participants agreed that a continual emphasis on examination/assessment of results made a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture.

63% of all participants agreed that a hierarchical organisation and management structure made a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture.

67% of all participants agreed that enterprise education made a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture.

The responses to these last statements are also displayed in figure 3.

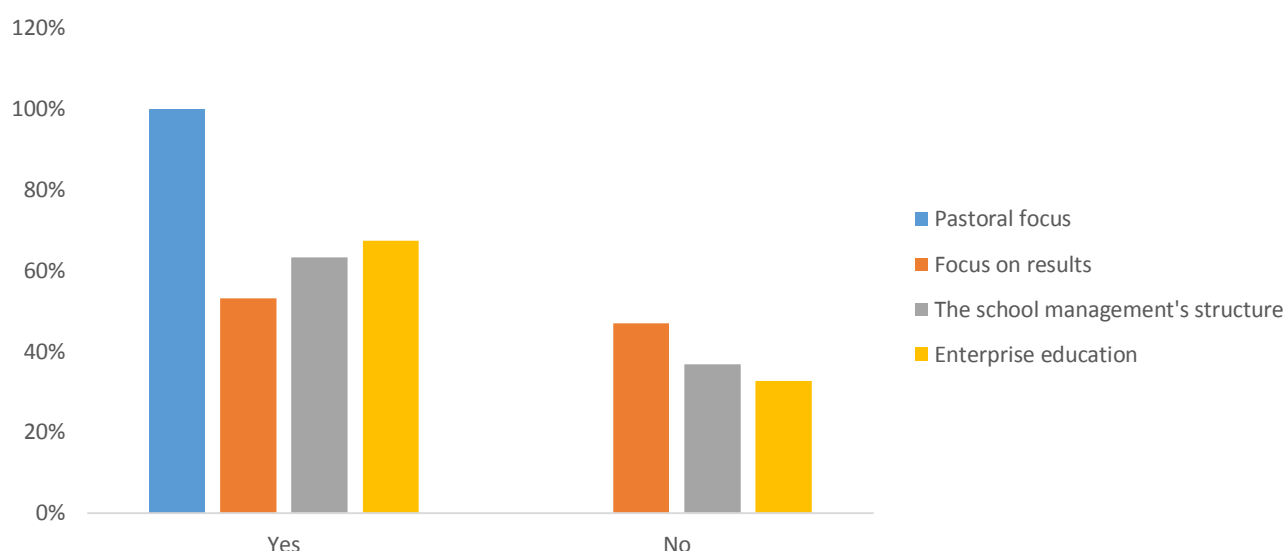


Figure 3. The responses of the participants to the different statements, whether they think it makes a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to get basic knowledge of participants' values and outlooks with respect to the organisational culture within schools and the financial health of schools.

Overall agreement between participants was found for the pastoral focus: most participants agreed that the pastoral focus is a key focus point in the schools, almost all participants ranked it as the most important or an important aspect in their school,

and all participants agreed that a strong pastoral focus made a strong contribution to the school's organisational culture.

Similarly, the focus on examination and results was also found to be a key priority in schools and it was ranked as an important thing in the schools. However, only half of the participants agreed that the focus on examination and results contributed to the organisational culture within the schools. It might be an interesting topic to elaborate on during the focus groups: why do many participants think it does not contribute to the organisational culture, whereas it is a key focus in most schools?

The management structure and enterprise education were aspects that were generally not viewed to be important within the schools. However, over 60% of all participants agreed that it would potentially make a positive contribution to the school's organisational culture. These are other topics that could be elaborated on in the focus groups: why are these topics not very important in the school as people think it does contribute to the school's organisational culture?

The financial health of schools is declining due to pressure on budgets (National Audit Office, 2016). However, over 50% of all participants responded that the financial health in their school was good. It would therefore be interesting to investigate why there are these differing views. Is the government too pessimistic? Did our participants estimate the financial health of their schools too positively? Were the participants in this study not representative of all schools?

Conclusion

Pastoral care is a key focus in schools and it contributes to the organisational culture of schools, according to the participants of our survey. In contrast, other areas that are regarded as being important to schools do not contribute much to the organisational culture (for example assessment and results). There is the perception that enterprise education can contribute significantly to the organisational culture, but this aspect of education is not viewed as importantly as the emphasis that is placed on results. Moreover, financial health is interpreted positively and this is in contrast to the general opinion about the financial health in schools. This information forms a background to the themes that were amplified in depth during the focus groups and interviews.

Chapter 4. Focus Group 1

Introduction

A focus group was conducted on November 30, 2016, at the Darlington campus of Teesside University. The aim of the focus group was to explore and document responses to issues relating to leadership and organisational culture in schools; financial health; digital technologies; and approaches to play and gamification. Focus group participants were 7 school business managers, two of whom identified as male and the rest female. Participants represented both primary and secondary state schools and were either from academy or local authority funded schools.

The focus group itself followed a day long schedule, with breaks and lunch provided. In total, participants attended for 6.5 hours. A standard focus group methodological approach was utilised during the first three focus group sessions. These sessions had a facilitator and scribe and all sessions were recorded. A participatory observant approach was applied for the final session, where facilitators and observers mingled and played with participants; the session also included a follow-up, recorded discussion with facilitators and observers to reflect on the session. All focus group sessions were recorded and later transcribed.

Results

The following sections highlight key points raised in the focus group sessions followed by some initial observations (boxed out).

Session 1^{4,5}

Theme/Question 1: Identifying what SBMs enjoy about their role.

<i>EI</i>		Would you say about where you work and what you enjoy?
6	Structure	I have recently moved from a primary to a secondary school and I'm really enjoying the different levels of structure in a secondary school. There are more layers of responsibility so I am really enjoying how it all works together. The other thing that I enjoy is a challenge, we are in a significant deficit so the challenge for me is to look at all the different areas that we can make savings on to get the deficit down.
3	Social interaction	I like the social interaction, that's a big part of my enjoyment, just have a laugh everyday despite being in finance and I just like the challenge of making changes as well.

⁴ All quotes are anonymised with each participant being referred to with numbers. Numbers are assigned independently for participant responses in each of the three focus group sessions. Initials represent the focus group facilitator for each session.

⁵ Underlined quotes are contributions from Pebble project team members.

2	No two days are the same	The best thing of my job like all of us is that no two days are the same and you never know what's coming.
7	The team	I enjoy the team I work with. ... I enjoy ... making things right, but the exact accuracy, the procedural site, I quite like having procedures that make things run more smoothly; that makes me happy.
1	See things outside the box	I think challenge is going to be a bit of a theme because what you said was interesting, because what I like is trying to see things outside of the box a bit. So instead of the way we have always done it can we please take a step backwards and look at it differently trying to think positively instead of: "oh no that will never work".
4	Change	To get people to understand that it is sometimes good to change and then seeing it that the system works better feels like making a lot of difference.
5	Massive variety	I've come from banking three years ago to become a School business manager. I like the fact that I have a massive variety of working with different people but I really like the fact that everything I do really has an impact on the output for the children and I feel like I add value to that and that's how I kind of get my kick. I wouldn't swap the job back.

Observations

Words used by participants to describe what they enjoyed about their work included 'challenge', 'change', and 'massive variety' in their tasks and work. In addition, the values of being on a team, social interaction, and creating a positive impact for children mattered to the participants.

Theme 2: What are some of the central characteristics that give your schools identification and characteristics?

3	Exams and performance tables	Exams and performance tables I think.
1	Academic achievement	... Some of the emphasis ought to be on the wider aspects not just exams, you're still expected to be [focused on] improvement in terms of academic achievement and there is not enough probably of the social skills, confidence for our kids.
6	Attainment and constant analysis of data	We have senior leadership team meetings weekly and the main focus during those meetings are about attainment and constant analysis of the data, looking at progression of the children. We are an excellent school that has outstanding results and there is a certain amount of pressure to maintain that.
4	Achievement	One of the initiatives we have started recently is the, I agree with all the comments about achievement is important, but in the primary school there isn't the constant SLT meeting every week to discuss where we are. But we try quite hard to work with the parents and with the community.
7	Attainment	I was just thinking that about attainment. The problem is schools

		seem to have a very narrow view. ... So you go to an infant school and all they care about is the children while they are with them three years, then junior school cares only four years and then secondary when they don't have sixth form only cares up to GCSE. ... I think I was a bit shocked at how cut throat it was.
6	<i>Cutthroat and divisive</i>	'But there is a lot of cut throat and divisiveness in schools and I think it's a mixture. I think it's false everybody thinks that we're all happily working in partnerships with each other.'

Observations

The orientation of schools appears to be related to 'attainment', 'results,' 'performance', a 'very narrow view' and examinations. While results and high achievement appearing as a key focus. One participant referenced the importance of working with 'parents and the community' at the primary level. Two participants specifically mentioned how cutthroat and divisive the relationship between schools can be, particularly when recruiting high performing students.

Theme 3: With 'results' orientation are there variables across the sector? What are the drivers behind that, do you think this is coming from within schools that are shaping the culture, or is it very much coming from beyond the schools?

4	<i>Less focus in primary</i>	Certainly in primary there is a lot less focus. It's still there, it's an undercurrent. I think from the teacher's point of view primary teachers, I suppose because we got quite a lot of teachers on new PS3 so they have been teaching for a very long time in primary, and they are not used to this idea of data.
6	<i>Secondary a lot more focused</i>	I agree with what [4] said, the secondary school is a lot more focused. I was quite surprised that how much number crunching they do and how much analysis they do. Drilling down into individual kind of groups and I didn't see nearly as much fractions of it going on in the primary school.
3	<i>Change is political</i>	I think the big change I have noticed is political I think. ... more pressure on results. ... there is this external pressure that you have to achieve, you have to make progress.
4	<i>No time to risk being creative</i>	That's what drives out the creativity, because you don't have time to risk being creative because if you are creative and that doesn't make the child move forward then you won't be able to progress for that particular term, so staff wants to, but just can't be creative. It's the DFE that is driving it.
5	<i>Massive pressure to produce results</i>	Schools feel massive pressure to produce results and deliver on outcomes and they weren't ready for that change I don't think. No teacher comes to school and thinks about wanting to do a bad job. They just wanted the best for the students all the time and since we have become an Academy and have more stringent performance management put in for teachers, they are hung up on outcomes, so

		what they do is referring back to things that make them feel like delivering, rather than outcome for the child.
5	<i>Driven by political agenda</i>	And I think it has been driven by political agendas like these guys are saying. We are missing the bit where we care for the child because we are concentrating on outcome
1	<i>Got to measure somehow; exams results</i>	... you got to measure somehow some data to measure, because it is difficult to measure happiness in children, isn't it? So you measure exams results and that's one aspect. But then there's also things in a wider context, so internationally. How much money the UK is spending on education relative to they always quote Singapore, don't they? And is it Finland or Denmark who spent so much less than us and have so much better results? So somehow you got to drill down in the data and find out why you're spending so much money we don't get these results.

Observations

While primary SBMs suggested that there was less pressure to produce results than at the secondary level, they still suggested there was an undercurrent of pressure and a veering away from the 'risk' of creative teaching styles in preference for 'progress'. Comments were made about how these pressures to change may be driven by political or governmental changes. They also raised questions about how performance was not meeting the financial investment, particularly when comparing the UK's system to other more successful countries.

Theme 4: do you think that is a potential tension that those external factors are having an influence on what goes on and that becomes a pressure?

4	<i>NEET figures</i>	That's still the case with the NEET figures not in primary but in secondary. The NEET figures, one of our deputy heads used to clap his hands when the NEET figures were down to an acceptable rate and acceptable percentage, because the school had a responsibility upon the age of 21 instead of 18 to make sure that these kids were in education or employment.
2	<i>Businesses don't feel children are ready for world of work</i>	That's what it comes down to, isn't it? It's preparing children for life and ... I think that a lot of local businesses and national businesses don't feel children are ready for the world of work so to put this focus on attainment.
4	<i>Some children don't benefit</i>	There was so much pressure on one point, I've lost track of it now but it is probably 8-10 years ago, when every child had to go to university. It is absolutely crazy in my mind anyway. Some children didn't benefit from three years at university.
6	<i>Need strong careers</i>	They really need strong careers education and a strong work experience at this link with businesses in the community and place equip these children to go on to build.

	education	
3	Not always best for students	Students that might be able to do a broad and diverse subject coursework can't do that anymore. They have to do English, mathematics, science, humanities and language and a lot of them are not competent to do that. Well that is a political change and ... and it is not always the best thing for students to do.
7	Preparation	When we are talking about preparation, sometimes I think it has nothing to do with the curriculum at all just preparation for work.... if you don't give [students] the opportunity to be responsible they will never be responsible.

Observations:

In this section, the participants focused on the external pressure, potentially adversely, impacting on some areas of students' life by a focus on academic outcomes. This was adversely affecting NEET figures, work experience, and 'preparing children for life'. One participant referenced political changes causing this disparity.

Theme 5: what contributes to the organisational culture; leadership styles and what you have noticed in terms of strengths, weaknesses and interesting aspects of leadership styles in schools and across school contexts?

4	Rests with headteacher; Bigger leadership team	For me the leadership rests with the headteacher and how he leads his senior leadership team and his teaching staff.... The primary it's a fairly laid back leadership [style] I suppose. I think he wants to be liked by his staff so that they will do for him what he needs them to do. If that makes sense. He's never aggressive or confronting or anything like that but he's strong. So if something isn't done he will take someone to task to say it needs to be done like this. But it's very laid-back on a day-to-day basis. That's different to the secondary. Much bigger leadership team.
1	Don't necessarily have a leadership skills	The headteacher seems too often work their way through the ranks from being a teacher. They have become a leader and it's almost kind of label that they are a leader, but don't necessarily have the leadership skills. Some of them do but quite often they just are a teacher and they don't just necessarily know how to manage people.
4	Headteacher is head of teachers	I think [1] is right that the headteacher is the head of the teachers. Their leadership for non-teaching staff is more difficult. They don't really understand what has to be done and how it is done, they just expect it to be right. But there is very little career or professional development for non-teaching staff
6	Non-teaching staff	Non-teaching staff are the only group of people that are identified by what they don't do.
1	Staff meeting =	In our school we have a staff meeting but it's not. It is a teachers' meeting. And when they say it is for all staff, they don't mean that, it

	teacher meeting	is only for teachers. And this is one of the things that I am bouncing my head against the ceiling because it drives me mad. We got a huge staff.
6	HTs as managers	I think finding headteachers that are good managers is becoming more and more difficult because you can't find headteachers.
3	HT management style	I've worked with a few different headteachers now. I have worked with what you would call a dictator but also other various leadership styles you let that kind of fear instructions and literally was all about performance of staff ... so I've worked with that one end of the spectrum. Another one is almost horizontal, just he is going into his office shows you videos where he is going on holiday. He was very laid-back and the staff were very laid-back ... It certainly sets the tone culturally.
7	All school leaders = teachers	In our school, just to give an example, all members of the senior leadership are teachers ... I'm not in the senior leadership team [because I'm not a teacher]. So the same thing happened with human resources, the assistant head who was responsible for human resources left was a teacher and was on the senior leadership team. When he left he was replaced by a non-teacher, because non-teachers are cheaper, but then that new person is not in the senior leadership team.

Observations

This cultural divide, alluded to in earlier sections is apparent, when the participants described the typical background of most headteachers: teachers who have come up the ranks and become leaders. One participant noted that these headteachers, in her experience, typically had no formal leadership training, and another noted that finding headteachers who are good managers. Other key points were raised about the cultural tone of the organisation set by the leadership style and the fact that non-teachers in leadership roles were excluded from leadership teams.

Theme 6: Anecdote: 'They got their amazing OFSTED report and everything looked really good, but then they were in the financial difficulty and member of the teaching assistants and other staff had to be made redundant. And I just thought that was a very interesting example of leadership. Someone coming up to seem very successful but in fact these dire implications in lots of ways for the schools.' I just wondered if you had any similar experiences.

2	OFSTED	That's what we are seeing in the Academy sector. ... We got externally audited every year ... Which is fine because that's is what I am employed to do. Got through the audit fine and we then had a last-minute OFSTED inspection two weeks ago. In the senior leadership team meeting, I asked them 'what do you need me to do',
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		as I am new in the education sector. "Don't worry they will not come and ask you anything" and they didn't. But why are we not combining those two together because it just doesn't make sense.
4	OFSTED	That's my experience as well. OFSTED was such a stressful time for all the teachers. But I was on senior leadership team and I was sitting there thinking "how can I help". I got exactly the same response, they will not come and see you. ... All that it was looking into the classroom and seeing how the kids were doing. And results and performance.
3	Results	Yeah if the results are all right.
4	Results	Yeah that's it if the results are all right then everything else must be running okay.
<i>EI</i>		<i>Presumably successful heads are the ones that ensure that the case that it is results focused and is managed well?</i>
5	Leadership style	Depends on how you assess though, doesn't it? I mean I have worked for two different heads. One was quite the people person and really interested in people and then the one I have got now which is a bit more like a dictator you know. He wants to control everything. ... Whereas now our head I can only talk to her. So when we go to a senior leadership team meeting everything is like a done two model. I can tell the senior leadership team what is happening but there is no consultation. And now no one else in the senior leadership team except for the headteacher knows what I do.
5	Tone of teachers toward other staff	And I joke all the time with my current head that teachers spent all day being right. They plan the lessons, they have all the answers, if the kids ask the question they have the answer. But then they forget that when they talk to someone like a business manager or support staff, I'm not a kid I know my job better than they do. I have staff that tell me how I have to calculate their payroll. Just a joke, they forget they are talking to adults. There is the bubble of education and I think there's a massive gap where they are not being trained in how to talk to adults.

Observations

General perception appeared to be that the financial reviews were overlooked in preference for preparation of academic or teaching review during onsite inspections. A number of participants noted that schools were content to worry less about finances if 'the results are all right'. Another suggestion (in the form of a joke) raised was that teachers don't know how to relate to non-teaching staff as they spend all day with 'all the answers' for children, rather than relating to adults in non-teaching contexts.

Theme 7: One word to summarise organisational culture and one word to summarise leadership.

6 Organisational culture: driven. Leadership: inspiring

3	Organisational culture: supportive. Leadership: variable
2	Organisational culture: hazard. Leadership: confused
7	Organisational culture egotistical. Leadership: brown beaten
1	Organisational culture: divided. Leadership: narrow
4	Organisational culture: pliable. Leadership: a paternal
5	Organisational culture: changing. Leadership: challenging

Observations

Organisational culture is described in varied ways such as 'driven,' supportive, changing, 'divided'. Aside 'supportive', most were either negative or transitional-sounding words. Leadership is described in negative or mercurial terms, though one participant did use 'inspiring'. Overall, terms had a more negative than positive tone.

Session 2

Theme/Question 1: Characterise the financial health of the school and expanding on the theme

5	<i>Good but worrying</i>	My one word is good, because we have a good black bank balance. But I wrote between brackets: But worrying.
4	<i>Not sustainable</i>	Not sustainable.
1	<i>Diminishing</i>	Diminishing. We are okay this year but we are falling off a cliff and when I did the three year forecasting, in fact I did only do the three years, because when I did the fourth year it was ridiculous the third already look like a mess and I didn't dare to show them the fourth year. So it literally falls off a cliff.
7	<i>Precarious</i>	Precarious.
2	<i>Precarious</i>	Precarious, just about managing.
3	<i>Cliff edge</i>	Cliff edge. ... 'There are people's jobs on the line and that's what keeps me awake at night and I'm sure that is the same to everybody. So in the context what you were just saying about, not being part of the leadership team and not be part of the staff, but we are the ones on the line doing those numbers saying you can't ... And that's why I said cliff edge'.
6	<i>Dysfunctional</i>	I last minute changed my word from ailing to dysfunctional.
LC		Does any of that surprise you, I see a lot of shaking heads.
7	<i>'not just me'</i>	It feels comforting that it's not just me, I haven't done anything wrong.

Observations

Words like precarious, cliff edge, and dysfunctional seem to typify the group's perception of their schools' financial health. Even the one positive word, 'good', was

qualified by 'but worrying'. For some, the financial challenges keep them 'awake at night'. No participants were surprised and even one (7) said it felt comforting to not be alone amidst the challenges—that they were not doing 'anything wrong'.

Theme 2: Role of SBM in supporting/facilitating financial health; would you say you got the support and respect that you would feel it would be appropriate for your job?

7	<i>'something will fall out of the sky'</i>	'Whenever I show him [the headteacher] that gloomy picture he thinks it is unrealistic because something will fall out of the sky and because things have fallen out of the sky. Does that make sense? So every year our carryover was a bit more than I had stated'
7	<i>I'm worried</i>	'We have been lucky in the past but we're not going to be lucky and obviously I can tell you that I'm worried'
7	<i>Work to capacity</i>	'It is nice to do things when you have the money but when you haven't teachers have to work to capacity'
6	<i>Seriousness of the situation</i>	I'm sorry but we are used to have classes of 26, but can't tell them we are going to have classes of 30 they will be so unhappy and disgruntled. Well how unhappy will they be if they get made redundant? It is just getting them to realise the seriousness of the situation. It is always "oh you will deal with that".
3	<i>Part of the team</i>	I am fully functioning as part of the leadership team and have all the responsibility. I did a presentation to the leadership team where I showed the three year forecast [where we] have to cut back in staff and we have to restructure our support staff because we are already quite lean on teaching staff.
7		There is no way I could say to a teacher to any teacher let alone leadership teacher you can't have that photocopied just change it. There is no way...
3	<i>Working together</i>	Yeah that was why I moved to this school. I used to work with the head when he was deputy and we worked really well together
7	<i>Head understanding</i>	I think the head understanding makes a massive difference.
3		Yes it does huge
7	<i>No control over the budget</i>	Because it allows you to do your job. Because all what I'm doing now is figures and passing it to them. I have no control over the budget.
1	<i>Not part of the team</i>	I am not part of the leadership team although I said I need to be. So they don't give you the responsibility and recognition
4	<i>I think I have respect</i>	I think I have [respect] from the head. Because I came from a secondary school and I was almost on the same salary at the secondary school as here as the head of the primary school. So you know to some extent, I know it shouldn't matter, but that sort of salary could see that I should get some respect for what I am know doing at primary school. Because I was worth it.
4	<i>'you will find it</i>	[The head says]: we need to spend this £600 on assessment

	<i>somewhere'</i>	papers and you will find it somewhere. ... You usually do, you see, and that is the problem. Because you do it, it is not a problem because next week will come to you again and say: we will be all right you will sort it.
LC		So it is almost a consequence of doing your job well?
4		Well exactly, yes.
7	<i>'victim of our own success'</i>	I have always thought we have been a victim of our own success.
7	<i>'massive change'</i>	I can't understand it maybe there was nobody when the transition happened, nobody sat teachers down and said: there has been a massive change.
2	<i>'be respected'</i>	But it was funny what you were saying about was it education to get to that point and be respected as a member of the senior leadership team has taken a lot of my time up. It also meant that I had taken a lot of things on chin, for example, I am on a duty rotor for supervising children. How does that relate to my role? But I did it because it gives me respect from my colleagues.... I will do that for the team but it doesn't work the other way.
5	<i>Performance expectations</i>	Like I would like the whole school to understand the budget completely and all of the governors to spend time with me and see what I do during a day, but no one is really interested in whether I deliver or not, it is only when I don't deliver.
6	<i>Living in a bubble</i>	If inside your little bubble you are living in a historical situation and not changing with the times and not changing the way you do things and the way you look at things and you can't foster that in the whole organisation that sort of outlook, then you are going to fail because you are one person struggling to make those finances work, surrounded by a lot of people living in the past doing what they have always done and you know this doesn't work.
1	<i>Commercial but ethical</i>	It is that appreciation from the rest of the team that you do need to be a bit hard and commercial, as long as you do it with ethical profession[alism].
3	<i>Financial barriers</i>	We also have some other barriers. We have got the financial barriers... At the same time we have got the cultural barrier.

Observations

While one participant mentioned being part of 'the leadership team' and having 'all the responsibility', for most an overwhelming barrier to financial health appears to be related to the culture and how many participants felt they were only partially or not at all integrated into the leadership of their school, despite having the highest levels of accountability for managing that school's financial budget and spending. As 7 noted, 'I have no control over the budget.' A number spoke of feeling the weight of responsibility (and accountability) without a great deal of respect. A number

referenced feeling that school leadership took their financial expertise for granted, presuming that they would find a way to make the budget work. Many expressed a desire that the school leadership would appreciate their work and the modern, changing context under which many schools now have to operate.

Theme 3: 'If there is something that you could change, to make you feel like your role, your function as a sort of financial guard of your school, what would make your job better, where would you feel you are really making a difference anything that could change to help you with that?'

5	Authority and respect	More authority and respect. Because if... I said ... you can't have that and that was the final answer and even if they went to the head they got the same answer. That would be amazing.
4	Working as a team	More working as a team in school. Because again, we have staff meetings but it means teacher meetings.
1	Authority	Being given the authority ... I know there's lots going on at the moment with ASCL and the school of college leaders about recognition as a profession. ... If it was recognised nationally as a profession then from that you got the authority by being part of that. You can get authority within your recognition from what should be your peers, not being someone just administrative. So it's two aspects, it is not just working within the school and getting respect the colleagues on a personal basis, that is important. But if you actually got a designated authority by being part of association and have a career path that is important.
7	Empathy	I've written down empathy. Just again it might be [also] understanding.
2	Collaboration	I think it will be collaboration, both internally in my own school but as well looking out and I am not sure how many do in the sector because I come back to what we said earlier this morning. I think we are all competing for pupils as well and not actually looking as a sector at our common aim is the sector, and to our local children in our authorities as well.
3	Separate funding	Separate funding, one that is based on student numbers and number of teachers that you have to have in schools and then a separate funding comes in for business management and school staff so they can manage how they want to manage.
6	Consult and involve me	I like it, I have a wonderful life. If you would have asked me six months ago I could have waxed lyrical for hours about working with the head teacher who had an antique view of business management. I was just a glorified secretary to him and not a member of the senior leadership team. Now six months down the [road and at a new school] I feel so appreciated, I respect that, I feel like they consult me, they involve me.

Observations

For the participants, aspirations for the 'ideal' functioning of the SBM role into the school setting, words like 'authority and respect', 'collaboration', 'team' work, being integrated into the leadership team, and 'empathy' came up. Other comments related to the nature and function of the role: having 'separate funding', being consulted and involved for their expertise, and gaining internal and professional recognition for their role.

Session 3

Theme/Question 1: What does technology mean for you?

1	Work	'I put down work, because I don't embrace technology in my personal life, I like to even remove my mobile phone when we are going camping. So for me, technology is just work.'
2	<u>Effectiveness</u>	<u>My word for technology is effectiveness. Because I'm a massive lover of productivity apps and tools and that's mostly what I use technology for, to do things in a more effective way.</u>
3	Resources or tool	Resources or tool ... I love technology but there is a limitation to it as well. It should not take over my life so in general I use it for resources.
4	<u>Opportunity</u>	<u>In a business sense: opportunity.</u>
5	Efficiency	I wrote down efficiency.
6	Efficiency, convenience	I could not think of the right word so I said time saving, but efficiency, convenience are much better words. I am a bit like[1]. I don't really use any social media or technology in my daily life at all, or anything like that. I do Internet shopping, if I need to, but certainly I use it as a tool rather than being controlled by. But at work it is time saving.
7	<u>Future</u>	<u>My word is future</u>
8	Information	My word is information. That word is for work and home. I don't really do a lot of social media but I do research things online.
9	<u>Fun</u>	<u>The word I would use is fun, because fundamentally I believe people engage with technology which they enjoy using. People will use technology if they are forced too but they will never fully want to use it to its full potential unless they actually enjoy working with it.</u>
10	Clarity	My word is clarity. I mainly use IT in a work point of view, because it makes instructions procedures clearer when they expect some work etcetera. Also research making sure that you are up-to-date with what's going on in the business. I don't use IT much socially.
11	Convenient	Word is convenient. It makes a lot of things a lot easier for me because it is all in my pocket when I need it, other than that it is a tool for work.

Observations

Perceptions of technology differ between the two groups.

- For Pebbleteam members: fun, future, opportunity, effectiveness. Technology was viewed as a more open and future-focused activity and appeared more embedded in the everyday activity of the participants.
- For SBMs: information, clarity, convenient (x2), efficiency (x2), time-saving, resources, work. Technology was seen by some (4 of the 7) as more functional, work-facing tool, whilst others saw it as a means to support convenience, time-saving, and efficient processes above and beyond work alone.
- *Use of technology outside of work:* A number of the SBMs (4) made a point of specifically mentioning not having any or much social media engagement in their personal life (despite not being asked by the facilitator).

Question/theme 2: Look at and explore Arro, as a Pebble (SF Software) software example ('so how was it? Was it interesting? ... do you feel it is something that is meaningful to you?') and does a tool like this provide enough support for what you need to do to be/become financially efficient?

5	Easy-to-use	It seems very easy to use
8	User-friendly	Yeah user-friendly
1	Income generation brilliant	You can tap into it, income generation is brilliant.
11	Really simple design	It is really simple ... I like the fact that I could potentially have everything in one place,
8	Ethical clash?	Sometimes there could be a minor ethical clash or technology that would mean that we don't want to accept the money.

Observations

The initial reaction was that the tool was useful, user-friendly, and easy to use. Questions did emerge that there might be a problem for schools if everyone used the same templates, etc., to apply for funding—Pebble team responded that the process relies on consultancy and additional support/training to ensure applications are right for each setting. Another point was raised that perhaps a database might have resources that schools can't or won't want due to faith-based or other ethical reasons.

Theme 3: Exploring the ability for staff to adopt a digital tool to support financial well-being or facilitate elements like grant/bid applications/writing, etc.

3	Can see	I had just three grants to apply for ... since September, so ... I had
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	<i>benefits</i>	to go through and then fill the application forms in. ... so I think from a finance point of view I see the benefits of everything [being] in one place ... all the information, attach files to it grant applications. I can see the benefits, I think from a grants point of view
10	<i>Could be useful for some staff</i>	We had one of the teachers getting frustrated about not having the right equipment and he asked me to find out how much [it] would cost. So I gave him the price only because he wanted to go out and see if he somehow could get funded. So for him that would have been ideal, but he is probably the only one of the teaching staff that would go online and would use the tool to try and find something. But for him yes it would have been fantastic because in the end it was all too complicated and he had no time. But would love something like that. He would probably be the only one out of some 15 teachers.
1	<i>Grant monitoring</i>	I'm thinking from a multi-Academy trust point of view, because recently our trust has said to us, if you are thinking of applying for any grants, you need to send them via the trust because some grants are saying that only one application can be filed per trust. And this would be an excellent way for a trust monitoring all schools and see what they are doing in the grant activity that they are doing.... I don't know how, because I am not a techie, several schools using that platform all belonging in a trust, is there a way to identify which grant which individual school have applied for so trust has the overview.
6	<i>Bid writing frightening</i>	I'm very much a blank page, it frighten[s] the life out of me when it comes to bid writing, because I almost need somebody to say right: "this is a copy of that application that somebody submitted last year and that went through and it might be a totally different project but it gives you an idea of what that particularly trust is looking for".
6	<i>Templates?</i>	Is there a template, I think of disseminating it over the school, so that if the teacher wants to apply for something, but you just want to do the finance, where I can have a template of: when they ask for finance include this, so he can do the narrative of his wonderful curriculum project, because I am not going to do the curriculum project, so there is no point me writing but he can ... then he has got access to the [finance] resource.
<u>2</u>	<u><i>Collaboration</i></u>	<u>That's kind of where we try to keep developing and exploring around collaboration.</u>

Observations:

Access to a tool to support areas of income generation appears appealing to participants, though its functionality or usability was questioned by some. It's clear that for some participants, having a lack of support, training ('it frightens the life out of me') or expertise-input around developing and submitting grant applications was a limiting factor for the adoption of these processes into their daily work. For some

(such as 10), it seemed like an 'ideal' tool for some colleagues, but not for herself. Others also pointed out their lack of technical ability ('I am not a techie') and others noted that some areas of applications ought to be supported by content experts ('[the teacher] can do the narrative of his wonderful curriculum project'). The notion of collaboration—or a tool that facilitates this—was noted by a Pebbleteam member and supported through the comments/points raised by SBM participants.

Theme 4: Exploring digital/modern gamification/social media elements: Rewards programmes; social networks; chat mechanisms; professional forums and communities of interest

Note: Due to technical delays from setting up the laptops, this part of Session 3 was cut down to 13 minutes.

- Most participants (8) raised their hands when asked if they use reward cards of some kind. Two (both male) noted that they do not use them or keep forgetting to put them in their wallet (3).

7		<u>'Well I got four of them actually, but I value the Boots one more than the others.'</u>
LC		What is it about the boots one that you value more?
7	<u>Points for pounds</u>	<u>Points for pounds.'</u>
LC		'Is there any of those or others that you just think I will never use it again, it is a complete waste of time?'
11	<i>Don't get a lot for it</i>	'I have got a Costa card and have only swiped once. ... I just don't get a lot for it'
6	<i>Air miles—but never used a mile in my life</i>	'I have got an American Express ... and you get air miles. Now I have had this for at least a decade and I must have spent hundreds of thousands pounds on it and I will always say "will you accept my American Express", so I get more air miles, and I have never once used air miles. ... I don't know, no matter how many air miles I have, I don't seem to have enough for a flight ... But I still do it, I still use the credit card. But I never ever used an air mile in my life.'
LC		What you like about your social media life, 3?'
3	<i>Being nosy</i>	'Being nosy yeah use it quite a bit to keep up with friends, quite a bit of banter with football, people I don't often to catch up with in real life.
LC		If there was no social media, would you be okay with that?' Facilitator notes: 'Everybody agrees and doesn't seem to be a problem.' Asking about chatting mechanisms: WhatsApp, Skype, FaceTime, or Slack. Most people agree on using WhatsApp except for 10. Other community forums?

10	Interesting conversations	'MumsNet is quite good in schools because you got interesting conversations going.'
LC		'Who would say that their use of technology in the digital world is more predominant in their work life over their personal life? Who would say the personal life is more predominant? That was four hands by the way, so personal social and free time life is more dominated by technologies than work life.'
5	Work-related matters	'The number of times I'm sitting on the sofa watching whatever I'm watching on LinkedIn, looking at stuff that is related to work, and the same with Twitter, I don't post on Twitter but I read a lot of articles that are like ASCL or Pebble or whoever.'
LC		Does anybody worry that the balance of use of technology is a bit out of balance?
3	Out of balance	'Mine was out of balance. On a certain moment I was using Twitter, Facebook LinkedIn, second news, checking my emails on the phone, four different email accounts, that was literally in the morning before I went to work.'
6	Reviews online	'If nobody wrote reviews [for sites like TripAdvisor], then you would not benefit from the system, it wouldn't work'

Observations:

Whilst the majority of participants did use retail/commercial reward systems, their adoption or appreciation was mixed. For some (such as Boots), it was a clear benefit; and for others (like Costa), the system appeared unhelpful. The same appeared true for social media adoption and the use of chat mechanisms and communities of support. An interesting observation was how the use of existing forums, such as MumsNet (10) was a helpful mechanism for community engagement. As far as the use of social media/technology in either personal or professional life, there appeared a split between its engagement in different spaces (reminiscent of comments made under Theme 1). For some, the use of the personal and professional was more of an overlap (5) and the digital engagement would often happen above and beyond the workplace. For others (3), the digital had, at times, been 'out of balance'

Participatory Games/Play Session

The aim of this 90-minute session was to explore and draw out associations with gamification techniques by having participants rotate between four tables set up with the following types of games: competitive, collaborative, solo-play, and chance.

Method

Small groups (approximately 3-4) rotated between each table and played for up to 15 minutes at each table.

Observations

Table with game of chance

Participants were given one piece of play money. They had a choice of giving the table facilitator their money in exchange for one of the items on the table (treat size sweets bags or small toy erasers) or use the play money to enter a draw for a wrapped prize. The majority (82%; n.9) preferred the *game of chance*, foregoing the certainty of turning in their 'play money' for a prize on the table. All (100%, n.6) female participants opted to enter the prize draw, whilst two of the five (40%) male participants opted to cash their play money in for the items on the table.

No participants asked to look at or hold the wrapped prize (with the more valuable prize). Anecdotally, of those who did choose to enter the prize draw, two stated that they felt they had 'nothing to lose' as the items on the table were not appealing to them.

Conclusion

Participants appear to prefer the chance of winning a larger prize in comparison to cashing in for a guaranteed but smaller value prize. The popularity of this style of game suggests that games of chance (e.g. prize draws) could be effective as a gamification technique.

Table with solo-play games

Participants were invited to play a series of solo-games: a stacking bird game; a word search game; a tablet-based game called Color Zen; and a tablet-based game called Spelltower. The researchers documented the best performance on each task. The overall highest achiever on all four tasks (and only that achiever) was given a prize.

An anecdotal observation was how quiet and focused the solo-play group was in relation to the other groups. The overall facilitator observed higher levels of concentration in that corner, as compared to the other areas of the room. In addition, while there was an overall winner, there were different winners for each type of game.

Conclusions

Participants appeared to enjoy the solo-play games, or a chance to demonstrate and improve on personal skill, though this was varied and depended on the type of solo-game. Ways to integrate and display expertise and achievements for excellence

could be well received gamification techniques. Participants were interested in seeing how their achievement ranked in comparison to others.

Table with collaborative games

Participants were given two types of collaborative games to play: a jigsaw puzzle that they were asked to work on together and a cooperative building game, Lift It!, that required two members do together simultaneously (each uses one hand to manage the same lifting tool). Participants were encouraged to complete tasks and given rewards for taking part. Whilst participants found the Lift It! game more complicated and, at times, frustrating, the jigsaw puzzle appeared to be enjoyed more. This may have been due to the idea of the shared (but separate) task of completing the work (as in working toward the same goal, without having to complete the same tasks) or it may have been due to the fact that the table facilitator had to ask participants to change tasks before they had finished the jigsaw puzzle.

Conclusions

The collaborative-yet-separate-task game (jigsaw) may be preferable to the cooperate-on-the-same-task game (Lift It!). *A gamification inference would be a shared goal with different processes enabled toward completion.*

Table with competitive games

Participants were given two types of competitive games to play: the card game *Snap!* and the board game *Connect 4*. The table facilitator had group members play each other and then declare an outright winner of each game. If there were more than two players, players had to play against each other until there was a single winner. A prize was given to the overall winner only. This was, by far, the noisiest table, with expressions of competitiveness and enthusiasm erupting at various points of play. It was also the most ‘serious’—from an observational point of view—with players focusing and concentrating in their responses to each other. The winners were not necessarily expecting their wins, however, with one or two winners expressing surprise at their wins. At the end, a number of participants expressed a desire to buy or play these games again.

Conclusions

This activity may have tapped into memories of games or experiences of gameplay that brought back a link to nostalgia. All participants were willing to engage in the competitive activity, despite there being ‘only one’ victor.

Discussion

Overall observations

- Cultural divide between school business managers (support/operational roles) and teaching staff
- 'Non-teaching staff are the only group of people that are identified by what they don't do' (6)
- SBMs enjoy the challenge, importance and creativity of working in schools, but feel their skills are less appreciated/understood
- Participants would like school senior leadership to better integrate their roles on SLTs
- Participants felt a focus on results and academic performance is adversely impacting other routes for students, such as work experience, training, etc.
- Concern that financial concerns are overlooked when preparing for onsite inspections.
- Concern that schools' financial health is 'precarious' and 'worrying'
- Concern that schools are unwilling or uncomfortable with commercially facing or new ways to raise money
- Play and games were well appreciated, with qualities of all types of games appealing to participants
- Collaborative and solo play games were the most popular with participants.
- Collaborative play with a shared goal (but clearly defined roles) may have been preferable to collaborative play that requires the same contribution.

Wireframing design considerations

- A tool that considers intra-organisational communication (internal) as well as interschool (external).
- Social mechanisms for support and engagement (gamification technique)
- Shared collaborative mechanisms: shared goals, completed in their own way (gamification)
- Means to track individual financial development and compare against wider field
- Flexible design to allow for adding in or removing features (for those more or less technically oriented)

Conclusion

The focus group outcomes suggest that participants value their work and would appreciate a further validation of their professional capabilities and contributions. There was a general consensus that leadership was varied in the schools' setting, but that those of a teaching background tended to move into leadership roles and that there is a disconnect between the perception of teaching staff and non-teaching staff. Engagement with digital technology was positive overall, though a number of participants did express a concern over competency and levels of comfort using and mastering digital technology. Participants were open to gameplay and elements of it, though there was a stronger orientation toward collaborative and solo gameplay. Gamification techniques that support an exhibition and development of expertise and an empathetic orientation toward communication and shared problem solving.

Chapter 5. Headteacher interviews

Introduction

This chapter covers insights drawn from the six interviews conducted with Head teachers (or related leadership roles) during February 2017. It provides some background into the decision to hold headteacher-facing focus groups and the eventual decision to move ahead with phone interviews in lieu of the focus group. It then highlights key areas of consideration about design and gamification, particularly in relation to the development of the digital tool, drawn from the HTs' comments. Insights to consider in relation to wireframe development are proposed in the final section of the chapter, Design Considerations.

Interviews were conducted over the telephone and recorded for transcribing and later coding purposes. Six of the seven originally recruited participants agreed to undertake a phone interview. The interviews were designed to be exploratory in nature, with the participants being asked a series of general questions aimed at exploring key themes: organisational culture and leadership; financial health of their respective school or college; digital technology and social media; and gamification. Due to these being phone interviews there was no way to recreate the play session that took place during the SBM focus group, but a few select questions were raised to explore values, outlooks, and experiences relating to games and gamification.

The interview data has been transcribed and initially coded according to areas primarily related to setting/context; defining the situation; respondent perspective; and approaches to people/objects. From this four major thematic areas emerged, consistent with the SBM focus group: culture/organisational elements; technology/design features; financial health/perceptions; and gamification/social media insights or feedback.

Results^{6,7}

Theme 1: Leadership and organisational culture

School performance, motivating factors for role,

1	Significant pressures Moral core of the school	<p>There are significant pressures on the school, despite the fact that we are continuing to improve.... It has always been interesting. ... I think we are doing pretty well at this point and we can do better and we are still striving to do better, but actually the way we have being judged looks like we are not doing a good job. I find it at least irritating and at the most disillusioning and it raises questions for me whether I want to continue in a profession that is being judged in a way that I perceive is unfair.</p> <p>The school always has had a moral core for the students and that is why I like the school</p> <p>We are being forced down [through measures or ratings] for what we are being judged by rather than what we feel is the right curriculum for our students. It is making me questioning whether this is a place for me.</p> <p>A few of the staff here that have left have either taken early retirement with the redundancy for example my deputy head is going to do that this year, because they are disillusioned with the education system</p>
2	Values 'Staff all enjoy being here'	<p>Traditional values. Or school as traditional.... what I mean by traditional, we value the very basic things, like politeness, courtesy, manners. ... The school has a large history.</p> <p>Sports and music are probably the most important things across school. So we have a lot of competitions going on, lots of events. So it is a nice place to be. Staff all enjoy being here.</p>
3	Outstanding Struggling	Current: School is outstanding. Future: Struggling and needs to move toward more efficiency.
4	Passionate	<p>I am passionate about education. I have come back into the public sector from the luxury of independent schools. In my spare time, I am chair of a small multi-academy trust in B-----.</p> <p>And I am interested in special schools as my son has autism.</p>
5	Achievements Character Mutual respect agenda	<p>I think academic achievements are obviously important, and we understand the relation between academic achievements and those destinations, but is also about the character, the character are really important key element in</p>

⁶ Though quoted comments in this section are directly quotations, all participants have been anonymised (numbers 1-6).

⁷ Participant 3 is currently working as deputy head at one school and will shortly be moving to a new school in a new locality where he will be the head teacher. Sometimes his responses are in context of his [current] school and some in relation to what he understands of his [future] school.

		school, and atmosphere around school reflects that. We have a very strong mutual respect agenda.
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Observations

Values are important to these participants, with words like ‘morals’, ‘mutual respect’, and ‘character’ framing the discussion. Drivers around student improvement and being student centred were also common themes. The staff experience itself—‘Staff enjoy being here’—was also mentioned by one participant as a feature of the school. Academic performance (and improvement) of their school was presented as an important value to leaders. A general perception appears to be that the function of performance and academic achievement, student attitudes, and overall school community and values were highly rated by the interviewees.

Leadership Style

1	<i>Distributed leadership style</i>	I have benefited from working for a number of headteachers and the one I felt I excelled under the most was the one who had a very much distributed leadership style where I remember when I started I was an assistant head and the head said to me: I don't want you to coming to me every five minutes to ask me things, I want you to get on and do it. If it goes wrong then I will be behind you and I will back you and we will talk about how it went wrong and how we are going to do it differently in the future. I found personally that I thrived under that leadership style. I had another head after that who was actually the complete opposite and micromanaged everybody, including myself. I was deputy head at that point and I found it absolutely demotivating and I became to a certain extent disengaged with my role because I felt I was not allowed to make any decisions, so my leadership style was very much distributed leadership style where I just let people get on with it. We have regular meetings, we have a lot of monitoring that goes on across the school but I start off at the point where I trust you to do as I have employed you and paying you well to do the job.
1		I leave them with leading the sites and I do quite a lot of work outside the school across the local authority and that allows me to do that. And I feel very confident that they just get on and do what needs to be done. That frees me up for the time that I can actually spend doing other things which the school gets an income for.
1		This is just something that has evolved through experience and through what I personally benefit from and enjoyed, not enjoyed, within different bosses.
2	<i>Open leadership style</i>	Although technically I am in charge, it isn't that sort of approach. So when I came in, the previous head, there was no SLT, there was just him doing everything and myself just picking up

		anything that was left. So we changed it straightaway to give a lot more ownership to everybody else. And it makes a huge difference. People know that they can come in and talk to me, talk to other staff and we will listen. We do tend to do things our own way, we don't always agree with local policy and all that sort of rubbish, it is what is best for our children and our staff. So the leadership is quite open, but when you are serious times with serious matters than they know that there is a change
3	<i>What's required to get the job done</i>	I use what's required to get the job done. I'm goal focused and want to get the job done. With some I have to be coercive and direct. Sometimes I will overmanage as a result. In other situations I will set the vision and then inspire and then get them behind it. Ideally I like to lead from the front and have a clear destination. I get people to help me get there by empowering them to make it happen. I'd say my style is 'transformational', adaptive.
4	<i>Changes depending on situation</i>	It changes depending on the situation. So sometimes I can be dictatorial and I can say no and I want it doing this way and now... sometimes it's a consultative style to get buy in and I delegate a lot and empower people a lot. I lead by example. I don't expect people to do things I'm not comfortable doing. I won't ask people to do things that will make them fail.
5	<i>Different styles for different purposes</i>	I have got a whole range of different styles for different purposes, but I am, I suppose very open, very transparent, very engaging, very driven, both with students and with staff. I encourage, motivate and inspire, lead rather than hold to account, challenge and criticise. I go for the positive instead of negative balance. I know heads who are very competent in making redundancies, I am very competent in making money. I see positive solutions to problems rather than negative ones.
6	<i>It is a whole new world</i>	I don't think until you actually start running a school you understand what the job of headteacher is. You step into a whole new ballgame and it is a whole new world. Your responsibility for sort of staff and staff welfare you almost feel as you are the head of a family and the family is not just your staff, but it is also the pupils and it is the wider family, the parents as well.
6	<i>Fairly flat</i>	I would like to think it was fairly flat, in that I like to give individuals the opportunity to develop themselves, I don't believe in micromanaging and I don't think that is the best way of getting great results out of people. There obviously have to be checks and balances but I think what you got to do is encourage people to take risks and encourage people to develop ideas and processes and develop their teaching and develop their own management style. There got to be checks and balances but at the same time I think a lot of problems arise when headteachers try to do everything and are micromanaging where giving people

		freedom and encouragement, I think it is very important.
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Observations

Leadership styles varied, but either focused on 'distributed' style or flat style. Some adapt style to individuals and situations—'adaptive, 'changes'; others note their 'open' approach to leadership, expecting colleagues to contribute to the leadership and innovation in the school. For some, the orientation was outcomes focused, with the HT being 'coercive' if necessary. A common thread was that experience shapes leadership style and that leading be transparent and supportive: 'I won't ask people to do things that will make them fail.'

Leadership Training

1	<i>MPQH</i>	I did the MPQH, which obviously is leadership training and I did find it useful and I think it does differentiate particularly between management and leadership and I think it was helpful so it was a level of formal training but I wouldn't say that it prepared me for headship. Therefore you have to be on the job. ... The most of it has been learned through experience.
2	<i>MPQH</i>	MPQH. So I've done that and was beneficial? Of course it was very good but other parts were absolutely joke because of some other people that run the course with me. I think the best learning I had was actually talking to colleagues from other schools.
3	<i>MPQH</i>	I did my MPQH over the last 18 months. ... The best training has been on the job.
4	<i>Leadership training in the Navy</i>	A lot of leadership training in the Navy and the rest has come through experience. Coming into the school environment requires a different approach. The military is an installed hierarchy. You never argued with superior; you never defied or disobeyed. Whereas in education it's not quite as rigid as that... you have to be more coercive or engaging with people because you want them to do something.
5	<i>Leadership courses and reading</i>	I also have lots of books on leadership and I tend to read. I think the first experience I have with leadership courses was the Pacific Institute.
6	<i>MSc in Education Administration</i>	Whilst I was on the senior management team, I did undertake an MSc in education administration ... I felt it gave me a lot of theoretical background which did become very useful when I became a head. I think it was important, I mean part of me saw it as upping my marketability to get a headship, so there was that aspect. But you don't complete a three-year course like that and the investment, time and energy and financial without getting something out of it yourself. Professionally it was very

		rewarding.
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Observations

All participants mention having undergone MPQH, a postgraduate qualification, or formal leadership training, which they enjoyed with a particular emphasis on the theoretical qualifications, but most noted that on the job leadership training has been more useful for them in their post. One did mention that having further training was an important factor in professional development.

Organisational culture and staff interaction

1	<i>Not much difference between teaching and support staff</i>	We obviously have teaching staff and support staff, but there is not a great differentiation between them. We have always tried to be very clear about this.
1	<i>Staff commitment</i>	I would say that the staff are very committed and assuring that they are doing the best for the students. They all do over and above what they are expected to do in terms of job description. People aren't unionized here
1		I actually believe people needed downtime and the need time away,
2	<i>Staff enjoy</i>	It is a nice place to be. Staff all enjoy being here.
2	<i>Staff retention</i>	We don't have many people who leave. The last couple of people that have left, except for the people that left because of they move to a different location, they all applied to get back. So it kind of tells you something. We look after everybody across the whole school.
2	<i>Family</i>	It is definitely a family approach.
2	<i>Traditional values</i>	Traditional values. Or school as traditional.... what I mean by traditional, we value the very basic things, like politeness, courtesy, manners.
2	<i>Never have unions</i>	We never had things like strikes, even with people involved in the union because they want the best for children.
3	<i>Direct, moral, pragmatic</i>	Current: Our culture is direct, moral, but pragmatic. What I mean by moral is that every decision we make, this comes back to this is about children and their progress. From finance to staffing, we consider what's best for young people at the school. The staff come second.
3	<i>Accountability</i>	Current: we have high levels of accountability
3	<i>Silos</i>	Future: my perceptions are that the leadership team work in silos and quite separate and not joined up and the lack of cohesion about functioning. There is no joined up thinking, so there are a lot of mixed messages and unclear communication
4	<i>Going the extra mile</i>	People certainly in the support staff where they were not feeling valued... they would not go the extra mile... they would not work beyond their job description... if you give people the reward and

		recognition, they will go the extra mile...
4	<i>Ignoring support staff</i>	One school I was in the headmaster would always speak to the teaching staff... included me and the finance director... completely ignored support staff...
4	<i>Light touch... not dictatorial</i>	[At the Trust level] We believe in a light touch... fair... don't interfere when things are going well... not dictatorial... where we have schools in difficulty (one in special measures, one requires improvement, secondary in special measures)... we go in and work with the school staff and then recommend more to support and improve... they see the benefit...
		There to provide capacity to enable them to do that...
4	<i>Collaboration</i>	Cross-school collaboration... we have a model where we pull together work streams... we've got one that's running today relating to attendance... in [city] there is a problem around attendance... culturally some view school attendance in varying ways; not the same value on attendance We have members of schools and leadership to come up with good ideas and best practice.
4	<i>Meet with colleagues</i>	Meet with colleagues: face to face with colleagues to check in and catch up... every now and again... I like to meet up with people every now and again... we share things as well... one colleague—in [city]—sharing best practices and ideas
5	<i>School leadership sets the culture</i>	comes down to school leadership to be perfectly honest. The governors here, the headteacher here, senior leadership team here, believe that students will only flourish in a very broad curriculum that gives them opportunities and experiences across the whole range of subjects and activities
6	<i>Tremendous will to succeed</i>	[there] was [a] tremendous will for the school to succeed. The school was successful academically and pastorally. I worked with a management team who were all pretty dedicated, on occasions I felt they needed more leading I would write more to come from them and trying to empower them to come up with more ideas

Observations

Descriptions were partly focused on qualities of culture and partly on the mission and work style of staff. There appeared some awareness of a gap between academic staff and support staff, though some stressed the lack of difference between. This appears to vary from the perceptions shared by the SBMs in the other focus groups. Some appeared familiar with idea that not all staff are 'called staff' and that in some cases, staff were 'completely ignored'. Cultural attributes included statements such as 'staff are very committed', 'tremendous will for the school to succeed', doing the best for students, 'nice place to be', high retention rates, family approach, traditional,

collaboration, 'direct, moral, but practical', 'staff come second' to the students. But for some there was an awareness of problems with cohesion and no 'joined up thinking', and of 'an us and them' mentally, sometimes perpetuated by headteachers themselves.

Theme 2: Financial Health

Describe the financial health of your school

1	Challenging.
2	Stable.
3	Current: Well-managed
3	Future: Actually pretty good
4	Sound: we have a reasonable level of reserve... strong business model and are careful with how we spend and how we spend it...
5	Disastrous: '[we have] one of the most poorly funded counties in the country... So yes, it is disastrous.'

Observations

For the most part, the interviewees expressed a somewhat positive outlook about their financial health, but also clarified by the institution of careful planning and innovative financial goals. For one school, located in the southwest of England, the situation is 'disastrous', particularly when looking at available funding.

Financial Situation and Challenges

1	Pressures	There is obviously the other pressures like financial pressures, that isn't a pleasure either. I had to make 20 redundancies last year and will make more this year. We have managed very effectively with staff.
1	We cannot get teachers	We cannot get headteachers, we cannot get teachers. That is a frustrating thing it is almost impossible to go without going overseas, going through agencies and paying their premium for finding teachers. It is almost impossible now to advertise for a teacher and number of applicants walk through the door and be able to choose. We are literally down especially in short the subjects, to find the best you can find and paying a fortune for them.
2	Diminishing resources	Our resources are definitely diminishing. We are not going the same resources we used to get.
3	On a knife edge	Current: had considered saying on a knife edge but there are other schools worse off. Over the last five years we have found savings in lots of other places. We have more income; 18 hours of the day we use the space and have income.
3	Pretty good surplus but badly affected by the funding	Future: [the school is] run with a pretty good surplus. There are some deficits but there is a million pounds they are sitting on to possibly repair the school. They are also badly affected by the funding formula and have to find £175K—a 2% savings.

	<i>formula</i>	
4	Matter-of-fact	I deal with it matter-of-factly... in the case, we can't afford more staff, so we can't and are not doing it.... by explaining it honestly and relating to the budget then it's ok
		Going to the board with the decision... has to be water tight, rock solid and tested from all directions...
5	Not funded for growth	<p>We're not funded for growth, we are only funded 12 months in arrears, which makes staffing recruitment and staffing payments absolutely impossible. You can't fund the timetable 12 months in arrears. And I heard yesterday that they are not going to fund us for growth next year either, which is ludicrous...</p> <p>We have got a big meeting next week with the senior leadership team about what to do next year. I need to find £300,000 next year, £300,000 worth of cuts.</p>

Observations

For the respondents, the financial challenges appear significant and required planning to mitigate or overcome these challenges. Responses included expecting redundancies, difficulties recruiting staff, having to spend funds in recruitment, pensions and forced savings, diminishing reserves, funding formula changes, and a matter-of-fact handling of finances. In general, while some respondents had a generally positive outlook on how they are managing their current situation, they also acknowledged needing to focus on their future.

Innovative financial ideas

1	Headteacher as funding source (consultancy)	I set myself a target, I get paid well and I have two very effective deputy heads and I could argue that I have a level of capacity and therefore I have set myself a target that I would generate half of my income back into the school and a pretty much reach that aim this year with some of the work that I have done with the local authorities and some online teaching companies.
1	Room rental Partner with apprenticeship firm	This is my business manager's thing, but I think we get an income on rent of about thousand pounds a month for the room that they have. The good thing is that we now have an apprenticeship group for students so that if they don't want to go into the sixth form or they don't want to go into university after sixth form then they can go to the apprenticeship company and they can directly go to secure apprenticeships. Yes so I would say that we have some quite innovative things that we do.
3	Good at bid writing	Current: We are very good at bid writing. We bid for all sorts of money and opportunities. Being a teaching school means we get money to run it and we run courses that we raise moneys from
4	Trustwide cost-saving	One thing we've just completed is a trust wide photocopy supplied scheme where we've looked at everyone's info and their costs on

	scheme	the leasing equipment and costs... an taken an average model of copier for a specification and said... in a primary this is wat we want and went to 27 providers... and got some stonking deals... these are the top three on that model, if you wish to buy into it and happy for them to do so saved them £16,000.
5	Consultancy Facility usage	So we got constant facilities, I do consultancy work and my consultancy work takes me as far as North Wales at the moment and probably doing one week in every four which is consultancy. This isn't ideal because it takes me away from the day job, but also other teachers do consultancy. We are getting in for about £200,000 a year. This is the only way to get some extra income.

Observations

The interviewees shared a varied range of innovative approaches within their own schools: HT setting own financial target (half of annual salary), room rentals, working with local apprenticeship firms (in the school), bid writing, group bids (Trust level), and consultancies. This suggests a trend toward engagement with innovation at the leadership level in schools.

Relationship with SBM

1	We get along really well	I inherited was significantly experienced business manager who is now working for about four years and I would have to say that he is a brilliant business manager, but his personality was we get along really well because we have very similar personalities, very similar work ethics and sort of work styles and I would say practically through the last sort of 18 months, where we had to be looking at making quite significant staffing redundancies, we have worked more closely together to the point where I probably work as close maybe even more close with him than I do with my two deputies. ... He is on our senior team and he is an influential and I am reliant on him as much if not more than on my deputies.
1	SBM looks after everything	I am very happy for my business manager to look after everything and I can focus on school improvement.
2	Office manager progressing to member of leadership	When I came in as deputy head, the School business manager was an office manager sort of thing, so we changed that and made it part of the SLT and we gave her a few additional responsibilities. So actually, the welfare of staff, making sure she picks up those sorts of things, but is also involved in all the meeting so over time she's got understand more and more of the educational role.
3	Leadership meetings	Current: our SBM sits at all the leadership meetings
3	Finance team separate from rest of	In the future school, the SBM is part of an academy trust and the finance team sits separately, and that's a bit of a problem. On the leadership team I expect that the finance staff will have a named

	leadership	person who sits on our team.
3	SBM creates union between support and teaching staff	[SBM engagement] It creates a union between support staff and teaching staff. The SBM often represents the interests of the wider staff beyond teaching.
6	Good financial background	I got [an SBM] who had good financial background and had worked in the school environment and had worked in the local government so she understood the working of finance for the organisation. I made her part of the leadership team so she had a separate role and she answered directly to me.

Observations

The interviewees expressed a general orientation toward valuing interaction with their school business managers. Financial skills were valued by the interviewees. A number explained that the role itself was critical to leadership in the school and, even in one case, presented a 'union between support staff and teaching staff'. Most pointed out that an SBM should sit on leadership teams and that a close working relationship between an SBM and HT was valued.

Theme 3: Digital Technology

Own Attitude and Approach to Technology

1		I speak to a lot of other heads on a lot of forums
1	Exciting and scary	I would use two words to describe [tech], exciting and scary. Because everything is moving at such a pace.
1		So for me I think, when there's a really good application for a technology, I would really embrace it. But why don't like are those things that last five minutes you invest lots of time and it and nothing ever comes from it. So I'm very cautious when we would spread across the school. But I think it's exciting, but equally I don't know anything to do with Facebook or Twitter or so.
2	Excited	[Describes perception of tech as] excited. Was a slightly pained expression. I love mathematics and accounts, so for those sorts of things it is absolutely brilliant. So somebody brings new sheet new program and everything works that's fantastic.
3	Embrace	I utterly embrace it
4	Embrace	Embracing: I embrace tech where it's due.
5	Essential	Essential: I can't do the job without technology
6	Exciting	Exciting. ... when it is all working and everything is going together, you can do such incredible things with it

Observations

Participants referenced being 'excited by' and 'embracing technology', whilst another noted its 'essential nature' for their role. One mentioned it also being scary (whilst being excited), 'because everything is moving at such a pace'. Some engagement

with external colleagues (forums). Mention was made of having a somewhat careful approach to it, not wanting to waste time on applications or activities that create a lot of busy work with no tangible outcome.

School's Engagement with Tech

1	Good	I describe it as good, actually the one thing we did do and we spent quite a lot of money on [our IT infrastructure].
1		There is a mobile app parents can download where they can see the attendance of the children and the timetable of the children. And helps in engaging with the parents and families of the students.
2	Colleagues good with tech	My colleagues are very good with technology, every classroom now has interactive whiteboards and we changed the last few years again.
2		We wait to see. I have seen heads rushing in new technologies and literally one down the line something happened. It is a big investment in money and you can't afford to lose that money those days.
3	Quite tech-heavy	We are quite a tech-heavy school in terms of teaching and learning. All of our students have devices.
3	Collaboration through tech	Collaboration is effective: we use Google drive for our info system. Our agendas, meetings, and all are on Google drive
5	Smart boards Tech in the everyday	For education purposes, every classroom has a smart board, every lesson is interactive. I can now see Mrs [X] teaching and I can see that she has a smart board on. Some kids will take with their phone photographs of the homework. Technology is part of our everyday life.
6	Having all the information handy	But it is also having all information just at your fingertips so monitoring the student's progress, I could sit at my desk and my laptop I could find out which students were absent and which students were present. When I was timetabling, this was pretty much at the forefront of timetabling technology, using computer timetable, I knew every member of staff was at any particular time, and where a particular student was.

Observations

The headteachers who were interviewed appeared keen to roll out and engage with technology in their schools, pointing to examples of range usage and integration. All had implemented innovative uses in different ways. Some point to waiting 'to see' before implementing technology, but on the whole the mindset was positive and welcoming. Collaboration and sharing through technology was pointed out as well. Clearly tech permeates all areas—financial, learning, communication, and so on. Having a leadership role, with an oversight responsibility for technology acquisition

and implementation, may have contributed to HTs heightened comfort with technology as compared with SBMs interviewed in the focus groups.

Social Media and Online Usage/Presence

1	Shop online	Oh God yes I do [shop online]. I don't shop apart from online.
1	Internet as research	I use the Internet for research, do most of my shopping online and definitely use things like YouTube, for entertaining but also for work
2	Quite a private person	I am not a lover of Facebook at all, yes I have to play some games, my wife uses that sort of things. Inside school I used all the time is brilliant, outside school I am quite a private person and don't want to share those things. We use technology like TripAdvisor, I will research everything in that,
3	Learning using tweets	We get kids [students] to summarize learning in tweets...
3	Twitter is a big part	Twitter is a big part of my experience. It's a great way to connect and a fantastic education tool. ... Facebook is more in a social capacity.
4	'look at my wife's Facebook'	Personally: not a great deal. I don't mind social media but I don't like being on it. I've heard too many horror stories. I look at my wife's Facebook but don't have my own account. ... I occasionally buy a train ticket.
4	Don't use it too much	I have a Linkedlin account but I don't particularly use it very much. I get more requests to be somebody's link.
5	Only want to follow people for educational purposes	We [have a] Facebook page and Twitter with the school, personally I use a Twitter feed to check out what's going on but I never use Facebook. I never use Instagram, Snapchat or those types of social media rubbish. I only want to follow people for educational purposes, I don't want to see what they do in their daily life.
6	Monitor things but don't post	I use Facebook, Twitter but I don't tend to tweet. I don't put things off on Facebook but I monitor things that are happening amongst my friends.

Observations

Social media is used and acknowledged; for some, however, it is used for purely professional reasons. The use of the internet is far more focused on shopping and information sources than social media. Two participants mentioned a second-hand engagement with Facebook (via spouses). Three mentioned an association with Twitter, for professional/school reasons, one even going as far as recommending its use in classroom learning. It's clear that social media has a place, but for most of the interviewees, there should be a separation between personal and professional usage and type of usage.

Theme 4: Games and Gamification

1	Games	I don't [play games]. I haven't got time. ... My kids do.... if we allowed them to they would be on the tablet the whole day....
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	Games	Sometimes when I go swimming I take my youngest kid with me but she can't watch half an hour of swimming so I let her watch me play solitaire on my phone the other day. But as soon as I start playing it I start to get these text messages from the app that I should carry on with it and it's terrible.
2	Games	I used to play Candy Crush but I can't go any further so I don't play any more
2	Games	I have to play[end] some games [via Facebook]
3	Gamification	I have used gamification to improve approach to giving feedback to students [in the classroom]. We modelled supporting students using the feedback style you see in games. <i>[immediate response, scores, achievements, rewards]</i>
3	Games	I play on the iPhone: brain training apps, anything that's puzzle like. I'm an avid timetabler in my job so I love puzzles and puzzling. It's when I go to bed and relax and play a few games or sat on a train and killing time. I use them to decompress. There is something just separating about playing a game. With a game it's quite escapist, sterile, clean ... it clears my head.
3	Games/ gamification	[Could you see the benefits of game-like elements in a digital tool?] Well why not?! Sharing best practice, feeling connected... whatever goes that is brilliant.
4	Games/sports	Not competitive [sports]. I go swimming and I compete with myself there. I don't do any other sports...
	Sports	I swim a lot.
	Games	Games: I play solitaire on my iPad... I will very occasionally play on my son's aircraft simulator... to see if I can do it...
4	Games	I like to challenge my mind and see whether I can get the cards in the right order... with as few move as possible Try and do it within 3 minutes... Occasionally we play scrabble and monopoly I think it's [gamification] quite a good idea
5	Games	my favourite computer game is space invaders, because it is all about order. The order and frequency. I also love to play cricket and it was also because the order is structure in the game.
5	Gamification	I am very familiar with it. I think it's a really good thing ... because the link between video game and sport is something that's gonna be a really key issue in the next few years. ...The billions of devices connect to billions of devices that people use to actually gamify their activity. So when they go home after sport, they will share their data of their activity with others about what they've done. I think is a really important to use. On the other hand, I also see students who are addicted to games. So there is also a danger there. The gamer culture we have is all about rewards, what if they do the 5 mile run, they will get a reward, they will reach the next level. Even if it is just a check of the box, kids these days just love it.
6	Gamification	[about gamification]: I feel at the end of the day I'm getting something for nothing I suppose. When you have spent all your money at Tesco's, it is like a free subscription to magazine ... you

		feel like you got something out of it, you feel like you get something back.
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Observations

Engagement with play and games was somewhat limited, though the participants mentioned enjoying solo play games such as puzzlers, brain teasers, or Candy Crush and they enjoyed more physically oriented games/sports such as cricket or swimming. One mentioned specifically enjoying games as a means to 'clear my head' and escape. Others mentioned using games like sports and activities for self or family improvement. When asked about whether they would appreciate a tool that had gamification elements (points, sharing forums, achievements, feedback), they all thought it was a novel and innovative idea they would be open to. A number actually mentioned specific ways in which they were familiar with gamification, for its reward-based systems and sharing mechanisms.

Discussion

Overall observations

Many motivating factors for working in school or education were noted by the participants. Education appears to be a 'passion or a moral imperative' for this cohort. Work ethic and educational outcomes also matter to this cohort. The overriding motivating factor or key decision making processes appear driven by their impact on students. Academic achievement and student performance was particularly important to the interviewees. As one participant noted, 'staff come second' in relation to the needs of student and student-facing activities.

This cohort appears very open to technology, particularly from a professional point of view. Many use technology in different contexts and have led the implementation of new technology in their settings. Whilst play and games is a more limited engagement for this cohort, there is definitely some use of games or apps, particularly puzzlers, solo play, or word games. Self-improvement appears an important factor in selecting a game to play. Three participants mentioned enjoying 'timetabling' or solving puzzles as part of their job or role.

The participants' description and impression of their organisational culture were presented consistently through being described as being 'positive and hardworking', though all mentioned the strain and pressure to maintain standards in view of financial pressures. One participant mentioned going into a new school where the

staff function in a 'silo manner' and did not join up their approach to work. All had undergone leadership training at some level, though many referred to the importance of learning on the job or from other leadership role models such as previous head teachers they had worked with.

Financial pressures were raised by all the participants, though many seemed positive about the general outlook, particularly when generating additional income. All the participants seem open to innovative or creative approaches to managing financial challenges. Most were able to highlight examples of their own innovation in generating additional funds, including consultancy work and pledging to raise part of their own salary for the school's budget. All seem to value the involvement of the school business manager role in their schools/settings, with some providing them with high levels of involvement. This enthusiasm was tempered for some by external pressures on school budgets and student achievement expectations. For one headteacher in particular, the changes in and pressures on the education sector were affecting his ability to value and find meaning in his own role, to the point where he was questioning if he wanted to continue as a HT. For another HT, the pressures on the finances of the school were 'disastrous' and becoming harder over time.

Wireframing Design Considerations

Carried forward, the following design considerations could be considered for the financial efficiency platform tool:

- A tool that considers intra-organisational communication (internal) as well as interschool (external).
- Social mechanisms for support, sharing, and engagement (gamification technique).
- Shared collaborative mechanisms: shared goals, completed in their own way (gamification). Means to track individual financial development and compare against wider field (public sourced data) (gamification technique).
- Flexible design to allow for adding in or removing features (for those more or less technically oriented).
- Gamification based on previous positive and understood principles. A further discussion of the wireframing design considerations drawn from these interviews is provided in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

This cohort is similar to SBMs in that they have a strong orientation toward students and the school's success. They also view the organisational culture as outcomes-based and the leadership style as largely adaptive to the situation at hand. They are very open to technology—possibly more open to adopting it than the SBM participants—and point to its value in the school setting and in supporting financial health. Overall, the participants pointed to challenges in financial health but also raised some innovative ways in which they are pursuing better financial efficiency.

Chapter 6. Focus Group 2

Introduction

In developing the research findings, the aim of focus group 2 was twofold: to further explore issues raised from the previous focus group (held November 30, 2016) and from the pilot survey completed between October 2016 and January 2017 (see Chapter 3); and to react to conceptual ideas behind the design of the financial efficiency platform. The themes explored included a further exploration of leadership and organisational culture; the conceptual framework for the financial efficiency platform; digital technologies and social media, and a further consideration of games and gamification through focused gameplay activities.

The same seven participants from the first focus group were invited to attend, though unfortunately one (female) was unable to attend due to illness. This meant that the group comprised of four (n=4) female participants and two (n=2) male participants. From the late morning session onward, the SBM participants were joined by four project team members from Pebble. Ryan Green, managing director of Pebble, joined the meeting remotely via Google to deliver his presentation on the conceptual framework informing the financial efficiency platform in the late morning.

The day's structure was intentionally different from the previous focus group. Whilst the first session was a continuation of the leadership/culture discussion from Focus Group 1 (FG1), the second session was a presentation, delivered by the managing director of Pebble (RG), about the conceptual framework for the financial efficiency platform/tool. The presentation was followed by a short discussion amongst participants to glean their reaction to the ideas shared. Following lunch, the dynamic shifted into a group discussion. This was to bring together the Pebble colleagues and focus group participants into discussions around the use of the financial efficiency platform/tool and to clarify/further explore any points raised by Ryan Green's (RG) earlier presentation.

The focus group data was transcribed and initially coded according to areas primarily related to setting/context; defining the situation; respondent perspective; and approaches to people/objects. Thematic areas emerged: leadership styles and enterprise education; technology/design features; financial support scenarios;

motivations and sustaining engagement; structure and mechanisms in the platform; and gamification/social media insights or feedback.

Results

Session 1^{8,9}

Theme/Question 1: Exploring leadership and leadership style further, particularly in relation to HTs' leadership styles.

1 ¹⁰	<i>Different</i>	The head that I started with is now becoming head of two schools and 70% of his time he is at the other school. So we [now] have a head of school who was a deputy and the leadership style between the two is so different. Quite astonishingly different. I only then realized that there could be so much difference in leadership style. The head of the school currently is very teacher orientated, he talks about the staff but what he means is the teachers. That is quite difficult for the business manager to work with because he is leading the teachers but not leading the school. That has been quite difficult to come to terms with. The previous head, who is now executive head, led the school as a whole, and made sure everything worked together for the good of the children.
2	<i>Problem with leadership</i>	[one reason I am changing jobs] is because of the problem with the leadership in my current school and looking at differences between how it is structured at my school where I work at the moment and the school I am going to work for, which is actually part of a small multi-Academy trust. They [the school she is moving to] have a vision for the future, the whole thrust as well as the whole school, the whole staff are forward and determined and positive which is contrary to my current school where the leadership is very dictatorial and quite exclusive for me because I'm not being invited to any senior leadership team meeting despite expressing the fact that I could contribute and despite doing the things that they want me to do, I'm totally excluded from the SLT, whereas the school where I'm going to is very much more working as a team and recognizing everybody's strengths and different skills and completely differently looking at it and a lot more business minded in a way, because it is an Academy and obviously there is a different focus but it is as if they got deliberately people together with different skills from all walks of life as ...

⁸ All quotes are anonymised with each participant being referred to with numbers. Numbers are assigned independently for participant responses in each of the three focus group sessions.

⁹ Quotes SF Software project team members are flagged.

¹⁰ All emphasis added.

3	<i>Contrasting styles</i>	It is much about efficiency nowadays. There are contrasting styles from different heads.
2	<i>A leader is not a manager</i>	I do think you need some charisma and inspiration because what is a leader, a leader is not a manager. They need to have that character and need to be particularly inspirational.
1	<i>Downside of a leader pretending</i>	I think the downside of that is a leader pretending to be charismatic or trying to be charismatic. It is something that is inbuilt and appreciated by people around you, but I don't think you can force it upon yourself. ... people know that [for some leaders] it is not natural [to be charismatic] and not what that person is like and that makes it even more difficult because you can't be the type of leader that you are not naturally. Leadership needs to have some natural elements to it.
4	<i>We are not students</i>	I am not sure I agree about charismatic. I think you need to be charismatic to walk into a hall and quiet people but we are not students. He shouldn't feel the need to walk into a room of employees and have the same effect.
5	<i>They are talking to adults</i>	They forget that they are talking to adults, is what I find. They're really good with the kids... but when he stands in front of staff, he talks to them the same. People really liked him and he was a really popular teacher, but they used to think he was a bit patronizing when he was talking to other staff.
3	<i>Talk to adults like they are children</i>	I have had quite a few autocratic leaders and I think the biggest difference I found is that they talk to adults as if they are children and tell them what to do but they don't give them a reason why
5	<i>Training is for teachers by teachers</i>	All the leadership training I have been on since I have been in the school is run by assistant heads, deputy heads, heads that either retired or still in practice but then they are also people who have come up through the education system where they probably just were a good teacher. They might be a good head, <i>but it is not proper external training, because it is still done by people from within education.</i>
6	<i>Training is luxury</i>	A leadership course might be seen as a luxury.
5	<i>Personable leader</i>	A little bit made a huge difference, my previous headteacher could have told you everybody's name, everybody's role, what they did, how the family was, what their wife was called, what the kids were called, because it all mattered to him. In contrast, the new head doesn't even know the name of the lady who cleans her office. I think that is shocking. She is never going to get people to follow her, or her vision, if she doesn't make them feel appreciated and part of the organization.
3	<i>Fear</i>	The thing about personalities at school, my previous headteacher was a very autocratic and he led by fear. All

		the staff and everything, even if somebody could not go to work because there child was ill, he would say: "I don't care about your child, you need to work". That is how he used to rule. What is interesting is that when he left, the results and attendance and everything in the whole school just plummeted, because everybody bought into him, they did things because they were scared
5		<i>EI: do you think there are particular qualities of leadership that are more suited to those different school types?</i>
	Locality and context	5: depends on your locality and context.

Observations

'Quite astonishingly different', says one participant, when describing the leadership styles of two HTs she has worked with; another describes the styles as 'contrasting'. This appears reinforced by a number of statements around the variation in leadership styles in school settings. For some, the examples ranged between positive and negative experiences with leadership. In others, the leadership style was seen as a negative, 'dictatorial and quite exclusive', 'patronizing', 'fear', whilst for others, there were examples of leaders that were admired, applying efficiency, respect, or schoolwide focus (as opposed to solely being focused on the teachers). Experiences and perceptions of effective leadership appeared linked to the style and tone of communication with staff ('talk to adults as if they were children'). The qualities of a leader ranged, from calling for 'inspiration' and 'charisma', to highlighting efficiency. And for others, charisma was seen as irrelevant to working with staff (though understandable with children). The highlight is on the orientation (perceived priority) of the HT: on teachers or on the school/staff as a whole. For one participant, the idea of the entirety of the organisation having a 'vision for the future', which she attributes to the range of staff and experiences coming into the Academy setting, was linked to concepts of leadership. Another area raised by participants was a concern over the leadership training offered to HTs: 'not proper... training' due to its delivery by those from within the field and seen as a 'luxury' for those outside of the teaching staff.

Theme 2: What is your perception of enterprise education in relation to the results orientation of schools?

1	OFSTED results	Every head, only thing that they are bothered about ultimately, is that they get good or outstanding Ofsted, that is where everything is driven towards.
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4	No depth	There is no depth to it. If you start with a foundation being a creative learner, if that makes students actually better students, but that's all starting rather than in year 10 or 11 whacking in loads of money for interventions when actually in year seven if your curriculum was maybe more creative, you are developing independent learners that get the grades.
5	Only about passing exams	Students are only about passing the exams, that is where it has gone back to. The government says it is about depth and detail, but basically it is about being able to recite information and to put it all down in the exam paper. ... For me, unless you pay them [teachers] to do it, they generally don't do extra things anymore. They used to do it, but there is so much pressure on passing exams and results that all the time is forced them into screening, reviewing assessments and data and making sure kids get results.
1	Teachers hate it to be like that	Teachers hate it to be like that.
2	Objective measures	You have to be careful not to get too tangled up with data, unless you got some kind of data, whereas it is some benchmarking exam, whatever it is, how do you know, what the money you are spending on is achieving? Unless you got some kind of authentic objective measure.
2		Doesn't this come back to a teacher, should they not have a little bit of common sense, profession pride, he could have said let's do science for half an hour and go out to the garden or something.
3	Teachers lack inventiveness	A lot of teachers came to us, we did an update on the network, we did it during term time and lot of staff come to us and ask what are we going to do? Because I got no PowerPoint or anything, well you just can kind of teach, and give the charts out as notes.
1	'it's all written down'	[Regarding written lesson plans impacting creativity]: 'because it is all written down and if they follow the tick boxes, it takes out creativity and imagination out of the lesson. So kids can't ask questions, because of the question doesn't come within the lesson plan, the teachers don't have time to answer it.'
4	No time to cover the curriculum	My best friend works in the same school as me as a deputy head, she is a geography teacher, and she was just saying that with the new geography curriculum, she has to cover now two modules, she is not able to do any recap, she has to cover everything and move on very quickly. The content has tripled but the students are getting no depth, they can only do that much and they don't have time to ask questions. Because if the teacher spent time on answering questions, they don't have time to cover the whole curriculum.

Observations

Most observations appeared related to the lack of enterprise education, pointing to a focus on 'good or outstanding Ofsted' and 'interventions'. There was a concern that with the concern focused on 'passing exams' that teaching or related staff have no time to focus on creative or enterprising learning approaches, or that they will not support this work without being paid extra. For some, the concern was that teachers themselves were losing their 'common sense' (infer creativity/enterprising?) due to concerns over meeting benchmarked/set activities—though one participant did observe that teachers 'hate' that. For others, the worry was in relation to the lack of time provided in the curriculum relating to too much teaching content without enough time for students to 'ask questions'.

Session 2

Presentation Ryan Green, Managing Director SF Software Ltd.

A presentation was being given by Ryan Green, Managing Director of SF Software Ltd., to introduce the ideas for the new software to help schools improve their financial health. A transcribed version of this presentation can be found below:

Based on all the research that we have done with Teesside University, ASCL, and the team at Pebble, we have really been set one question by the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency through the Innovate UK programme and that is: how do we improve financial health and efficiency in schools? Based on all the research, the discussions, the focus groups, and the analytics that we have been looking on, if schools are to make a 2% saving on their budget year on year, they do actually know what action they need to take but it is more that they need help taking that action. Our big idea is around the fact that givers gain and this is a principle used by a lot of business networking groups, a lot of SME networking groups, who want to help support each other when they have lack of resource or time or expertise. That is really around the principle that givers gain, if you give your knowledge and expertise and support to others, others will then give their knowledge and expertise and support to you. In turn, you will be able to grow collectively rather than individually and that works quite well. We see a lot of this also used in the technology sector, so the development of open sourced code structures, that has really helped progress technology and certainly

online software applications significantly by open sourcing code, giving people knowledge and expertise in an open forum uncharged, so that the collective is all contributing towards a central objective. What we want to produce is an insightful system that introduces users to teams of people with a common goal so that they can support each other in collaborative action and ultimately make bigger steps in growth and development and achieving their goals than they would do if they were operating individually. The type of system that we are going to develop is an online platform that would look to create and profile an individual so that we understood a bit more about them as a personality, their skills and expertise, and the type of organisation that they are linked to, so the school, its current status, financial status, maybe its ranking on the efficiency metric, its Ofsted rating. We would then set up all these individual profiles on the system and build all of these online. For me, it is about the user having a thing that they want to achieve or do an action that they are trying to get done that they are really struggling with, that it is becoming overwhelming and therefore they are not able to kind of break it down into clear action points, so what they would do is: they would try and put their objectives into the system and the system would interpret that and it would understand what their objective is and it would try and link it to some prebuilt project plans, business cases, or templates that we have already got set up in the system. That would give them a project plan and outline structure that they could then use as a foundation for creating that action and what they need to do. Because every single school is completely different, we cannot just give a set of instructions that they would complete. They really have to put in their own variables of their own organisation. So this template is not a set of instructions but it is more a framework for completing actions, so have they done full assessments, have they got perspective, do they know what the outcomes are, do they know what the return on effort is, do they know what the financial objective would be, or do they know what their financial return would be once they completed this task? In order to facilitate that information and to open a dialogue, the system would also bring together a team of other like-minded people who would also have a shared interest in seeing that person's goals succeed, whether they want to see the outcome, whether they just want to contribute, whether they wanted to hear perspective and have a better

understanding, whether they actually have something valuable that they wanted to share, the system would build a pool together, a team of people, online, who would be able to co-collaborate with the project lead to complete the template and complete a full business case for which they then could take back to their senior leadership team or whoever is relevant to get sign off and then complete the action. The system would schedule all of that to work through this template, so all the relevant information is completed. It would also note when key dates or milestones should be actioned and the financial impact that that would potentially achieve the school if it was implemented. We want to log these important dates and financial impact so we can reference this later on and understand whether things are being delivered within a timeframe, whether they are actually making the financial returns, and more importantly, if they are not being implemented, what happened to these business cases, were they rejected, and if so, why, so we can look to adapt and improve those on a later date and better understand the barriers to change that are happening within a school. Once this is completed, this would give the user, the project lead, a real project plan to execute those efficiencies and to execute action plans that would deliver financial health within their school. The system would be able to take that template and add it to a repository for future reference, for other users to be able to access these templates and again use those. In fact, their contribution to other people would give them credits for which they could get materials to which they could reference. The big thing is that it should be proactive, the system needs to be supportive, it needs to be proactive, it really needs to help collaborative operations between different organisations that have a common purpose and a common goal. It does not matter if your school is in the south-west of England or the north-west of England, it is really about people with a common goal and a common objective and bringing them together so they could co-collaborate without the issue of location or geographics to hold people back. What the system is not and I think it is important that we understand this, it is not a moaning forum or a thing that people dip into occasionally when they want to vent or to anger. It really wants to be supportive, almost an assistant to a senior leadership team member, to help them achieve their objectives. It is not a training platform, it is not a voting platform, it does not isolate people,

it does not create an individual user profile, users should not feel like that, they just have their user profile and they are quite isolated from everybody else. It should not be complicated, it has to be simple, it has to be engaging, it has to be very much visual and hands-on and tactile and it should not really be too much, while they should be structuring their project plan, it should not be all about writing enormous documents, because people will not take action and this system is more about facilitating that in an effective manner with adding perspective and collaboration so that multiple people and organisations are impacting through collective work.

Theme/Question 1: Initial reactions to RG's presentation, conceptual principles behind the financial efficiency platform—choose a word/phrase for initial reaction, then expand

3	Support	I just liked the concept of network and peer support, that is the thing we tried to do locally, we have network meetings, we had cluster meetings, we discussed with colleagues the same issues we had, but it becomes a bit of a moaning and talking shop but we never came onto answers or solutions. I like the idea of peer support with a definite solution.
6	How is it different from existing networks?	I'm in lots of different groups, on the phone, on a weekly or daily basis on email groups, there are networking groups I tap into. This seems great because obviously it is extending that financial network, but I'm wondering how it is different from the group support I already got. So it is almost like a library of frequently asked questions?
4	Imaginative	It is not sort of reinventing the wheel, because we are obviously talking about forms and things, and I am wondering how it works because how will these nine people all be available at the same time? .. you put your question in at say 8 o'clock in the morning when you start, then you identify these nine people, I am assuming there and then but I don't expect they will drop their work and will have a half an hour discussion. I'm wondering is it then scheduled, it comes back to we have worked on this idea, we have come back to the six people, we have arranged a conference call which is a bit what it's like, is it going to be like that, because they're not just going to drop it there and then, are they? Did it say that it would almost act like a clerk? That it would have afterwards an email with the action points. I am not a social media person, I am impatient, so if I write into a forum and I don't get an answer straight away, I am thinking, to sit and watch this, what do I do?
2	Proactive	I kind of agree with both of you as well, first I thought why is it different, we buy into the School Bus, I don't know if anybody else

		does, we have The Key, which is similar but more expensive, we also have forums and there is opportunity, we have a Q&A on there, I mean it is not a dialogue, but we can put a the question in, and you can get an answer, so there isn't that peer discussion that them on about. I really like that. But this how practically it will work, I like the idea of it being like a little thing being just sat on the desk. That you can tap into somebody in Dorset, that you might have a problem that nobody can answer in our forum
1	Outcomes	<p>See you got a group, and you go on to your computer and login, there are always people there, it made me think of how we use our forum in[city], it is based on emails and you get several emails every day, it is fantastic but you need a next stage which might be this program. So this is an outcome and how those are recorded, so that the end result is, I know I have asked this before, the system guides you, this question has been asked before and this was the response, so that the recording and the outcomes of it all, rather than repeating itself and having a nice chat and the next month you have the same question and you can't remember what the outcome was and I didn't write it down.</p> <p>It is like Internet, but with a structure to it. You can use it as an informational tool as well as discussion for.</p>
5	Great idea	<p>How does it become a reality? They have forums and stuff so that will be good for me, time would be a big thing for me, because how would I fit these discussions in when I have a demanding head? And then, even if I come up with the best solution in the world, how do I get the headteacher to accept that solution?</p> <p>I think, having nonlocal people help me with problem is beneficial, because the schools are so competitive at the moment, we're not talking as business managers because we are all interested in each other's kids, which is absolutely ridiculous. I mean I speak to other business managers out of county, and I have got friends that are business managers out of the county, I asked their opinion on things, but I can't do that with the school just down the road.</p>

Observations

Overall reaction was positive, with words like 'proactive' and 'support' emerging. Participants complimented the idea of an action-based network, which expands on existing local areas and provides 'peer support' and 'guides you'. What one participant noted was that they liked it because it didn't just want a platform that enabled 'moaning' about work challenges, but that offered a 'definite solution.' One particularly liked the idea of a 'little thing being just sat on your desk', one that enabled 'dialogue'. For others, the idea of having a network outside of a local/regional network should help reduce competition and facilitate collaboration and

was seen as a real positive. For some, though, questions immediately emerged: how does it function, how it is different, what time is required, who is involved, 'how does it become a reality'? The group seemed to 'chime in, across the board', with some questions about what makes the platform different from similar tools and how it will work in practice, but this was often balanced with general positive comments, such as 'great idea'. The functionality of the platform was a predominant question, with some participants wondering about the time commitment, the platform itself, and how it would look—'library of frequently asked questions', 'people are always there, 'like internet, but with a structure to it', 'being like a little thing being just sat on the desk'.

Session 3

Further expansion on the ideas generated during Session 2 (with a pause from lunch)

Theme: Incentives, retention, engagement, buy-in for the platform: what ways would you retain or encourage your engagement with a tool like this?

3	Get from giving (up-votes)	I would see some sort of benefit, there has to be something beneficial obviously. If you put something in, you should get something back. You want to go back to it because you gained something. Cash would do it for me. .. [examples would be] if you gave 10 solutions that were [useful], if you join 10 groups and it was on construction or something like that, you gave the best advice
		LC ¹¹ : <i>How would the best be determined?</i>
		3: with a vote, like on trip advisor, or Amazon with the most helpful review or something.
6 + 4	Up votes or rewards—could prove discouraging	4: that would put me off. Because what about people being part of six forums but are never the best?
		6: if you are in start of your career you probably have less solutions to offer.
4	Receiving information as the 'reward' for participation	there was this moderator or PA or, so and it would not matter if everybody in the group got it, it wouldn't have to be something just for me, in the end, I got a very comprehensive report of the advisory was given in nice bullets points, action points from those, so I didn't have to go away and write a report about information I got. If I had to go away from this event, have two write a three page report and explain the headteacher why it is worth coming here, I might not come here.
4	Justifying commitment to the platform (putting in and getting out) with school leadership	That I have to justify the amount of hours worked, because at the end my school pays my hours and we are talking about best value. The number of hours doesn't matter, and some people have to give and if I don't have an end product at the end of the

¹¹ LC = Facilitator question or comment.

		month, for the number of hours I have worked, that is just me being a private contractor and going out for five hours. School wants something back and what I could say is that for my question to which I only devote one hour on, is what I actually got was this really comprehensive report. ... So I got this beautiful report on which I spent five hours, but how my time was spent was one hour on my question and four hours of projects helping people, but what I got was five hours' worth of product back.
1	Code of conduct/behavior on community areas of the platform	if [on my local support network] I answer a question or give my thoughts on the questions being asked and that person than just emails back and say thank you 1, that makes such a difference. So I think, if they ask question again, I am more likely to answer. It would have taken two seconds, but whether they took no notice of it at all, or where they respond, they just ignores the fact that I bothered and that makes a huge difference.
2	Buy-in and endorsement for professional associations	You need to get someone like the Association of School and College leaders, or the DfE, on board to understand it because they can promote it as well.
4	DfE support or mandating of the platform	The DfE have to do something with this project, don't they? ... could it be that they say, will actually, you have all got to use this, obviously once it is installed, it is up to you whether to use it. However, as part of Ofsted we would see this as good practice. So if you're not using this tool, we would ask you why are you using this tool?
	Professional dev't or school benefits as incentives. <i>LC: Would you feel more driven to participate if rewards and incentives were personal, if they would help you with your CV, professional development, or would you feel a bit more driven if they were tangible benefits for the school?</i>	1: the latter for me. I am too old to worry about the career development.
		6: for the school would be better to get buy in from the headteacher.
		5: CPD on the support staff side, because there is not really a niche for that right now. Everybody is off for teachers at the minute. [from Session 5]
	Advertising on the platform to keep costs down. Inclusion of a	4: would it be appropriate advertising?
		11 ¹² : now it will be appropriate, related to schools
		3: I think it would make sense
		2: as long as it is relevant and appropriate and not too intrusive.

¹² Pebblecolleague.

	'recommended tradespeople/resources' database/forum	Obviously has to be visible.
		4: it should not flash up every five minutes of your whole screen
		4: a bit like federation of master builders?
		5: yes. So if I am having a problem with my heating contractor, I can look on him and I can find another one in the Xxxxxx area. ... Right level of insurance, for anything else that I need to checkout on my list to find, so I have somewhere else to go.
		2: would it be password protected so it was just for the people in the form so the advertising can't see what happens in a forum?

Observations

There was general openness to processes or incentives being in place to encourage participation and engagement with the platform, but the specifics varied. For all, the idea of getting something out of the platform, after they had put something into it, was appealing but what that was differed. Rewards in the forms of reports, information, or even financial rewards were all mentioned. When asked, participants said they would prefer rewards for their schools rather than CPD developments. Participants were open to advertising on the platform (if it kept costs down) if it was appropriate and also responded positively to the use of a 'recommended tradespeople/resources' area of the platform.

Theme: Structure or mechanics of the platform: how do you see the platform working, what features do you see/imagine, who is involved/moderating

1	Who is involved/how involved	1: there's another aspect, I suppose it's competence really, every School business manager, some come from very different backgrounds and have very different experiences through their careers as school business managers, and again what I think they try to do in [city], it didn't quite work, was to people to own up to say. So everybody tells their background but the people don't like saying it, we are very reserved as English people I think, we don't like say we got any particular competencies, but it is actually very useful, I was involved in the building project was actually quite happy to say that, if it is relevant.
4	Who would moderate these groups	11 ¹³ : <u>who do we think this moderator is going to be? Is this an automated?</u>
		7: no.
		4: I think it is best if it is someone from Pebble.
		11: <u>I think that if it is somebody from the group, it is just not going to work.</u>
		11: it could be a retired teacher that sits in?

¹³ Pebble colleague.

		4: Teachers?
		<u>11: the facilitator is doing nothing but trying to gather solutions from the table, it is not their knowledge, they are not knowledgeable people that put in any insight into this, they just trying to take the needs and create the outcomes.</u>
		1: but the report you would have to interpret that knowledge and the interpretation of some people might be quite different from what is meant.
		<i>LC: so if you are a group of school business managers, would you feel more comfortable if the person who moderates is someone who...</i>
		1: someone with a similar background, or someone who understood the background.
		4: or somebody from Pebble who you know works with schools and is impartial, without a slant, the teacher will interpret what was being said and I believe in a very different way. So it would come across different in the final report. Also, the teacher might hear something he doesn't like. It should be someone totally independent....
		F2: independence is the key?
		1: yeah.
		F2: but also knowledgeable? So they understand your background. People agreeing. I see you nodding [2], do you feel the same way?
		2: yes, definitely.
4	Varying themes/topics/issues for the groups	4: do they need to have a background though, because if they do not have a background they cannot have a bias.
		4: Is there a way that you can have different reasons to have a group discussion, so it could be because I have a financial scenario that I was different opinions about, so you almost give structures reasons to there is almost a set format to a discussion. So everybody goes into the discussion with the same purpose, because the assignment is clearly specified.
	(Public) data accessible through the platform	<u>11: I don't know how feasible this is, every time you go into the program there might be just a little bit of additional information in the system asks for you, it is not totally laborious information capture but it creates, the more you use it the more in-depth picture of your school, so there could be decision-making part of it, where you are looking at whether a decision is going to be feasible for your school or the implication driven by maybe an Excel spreadsheet or a financial program, I don't know how this would work, but you could put in and you would not base your decision only on that, but it might be a tool that supports your decision-making, something you are</u>

		<u>getting out of the system.</u>
		4: it could be, you are talking about data, so you are talking about whether it is a good idea to set up a boys and dads day and applying for grants. Pulling out relevant national data, so there is data of deprivation in all areas available and if the person then finds information that could be helpful.
		3: I have done loads of work on benchmarking and try to analyze data and it takes loads of work to be able to do find the right school with a similar number of students, similar budget, similar social demographic kind of intake and I've want to see what they have done with some sort of results and I want to contact that school. That seems to be useful to me.
		1: yes, there is this benchmarking site to which we are told to go up to, but that data is often 18 months old at the very earliest. So it is not in your time, it is 18 months ago and a lot of things change 18 months in schools.
		<u>11: isn't that still fairly new?</u>
		1: still lots has changed. And the future is changing as well. So what you're saying what people here and now is today as opposed to here are the results from 15/16 current data will be lots more useful.
	Expectations for participation in the platform	7: I don't think we want a system that tries to force people to go and sit in. It would be more like the system tells you: "it says in your profile that you can these and these and these, would you like to be part of this group, yes or no?". Some people might say yes and some people might say no. It was a big enough community you could pull people in, you shouldn't feel...
		4: but there is some sort of commitment, he did talk about it that there is a buy in, and the whole thing is that the givers gain.
		2: I think all school business managers as well, will have different case strengths, one of your strengths is finance (pointing to 4) but it might not be someone else's. If you want the finance question and you know you could go to 4, who is a finance expert, so I think it is about bringing all those key strengths to the team.
	Embedding the culture survey data into the platform	4: So that the system can say, look you have a similar school but they have got this style of management that you are struggling with, they've managed to do the same. So you could take it to a head, not directly criticizing his management style, but just telling him about another school a different management style was more successful.
	-Platform similar to	4: I was directly thinking about match.com. It is like the

	match.com- Gathering support around commonalities in schools	organizational equivalent of match.com.
		5: you need to have the commonalities, so you can say, we are doing this, but other schools are doing this, so we can try it.
		2: it helps you think outside box. You can refer to other schools to do it differently than they have done before.
2	Platform could be a lifeline	The role of the school business manager is quite lonely, by its nature, because you are genuinely the only one in the school. Having an external network is so important because for teachers there is a lot of teacher in the school and they all understand what the others are going through and support staff, but there's only one business manager and this is one of the few ways that we are actually able to talk to each other and share staff and there are sometimes things in the school that other people either don't understand or you can't really talk about that in the school because it is either confidential or there are loads of reasons why you settle on your own tried to puzzle it out so I could see that this could work as a lifeline sometimes.

Observations

Whilst the idea of the structure remains somewhat unclear to participants, the idea of a moderator was discussed at some length. Feelings were that someone 'totally independent' should be involved in supporting groups, though they should also be knowledgeable. One point raised was that a teacher (or retired teacher as suggested by a SF Software colleague) might have a 'slant' and interpret the discussion in a different way. One participant recommended that groups be shaped around shared themes or needs. Another suggestion was that the platform/tool have publicly available data included to help participants with grant writing or other related work. The structure of the platform was compared to match.com, where people are paired up by compatibility (or similar school demographics)—having a structure that used culture survey data among other data would help match schools up in better ways. The participants offered discomfort with the idea of being seen via video screens, while being ok to seeing others. Some were concerned about the perception of working/not working whilst using a platform that might take them away from their day-to-day work.

For some, cost was an issue (from Session 5): 'there will be a question of money, ... You know the money is so tight, it might be a stumbling block because there is a cost. So they wouldn't even consider it, or think outside the box and think it would be

amazing, because they see it will cost you 500 pounds a year or whatever it might be and therefore it would be no.'

Theme: Justifying time with the platform, building capacity, validating professional status of SBMs

1	Perception of an SBM's time 'at the desk'	You sit at your desk for 37 hours a week, that's all you have to do? How do you spend your time? And I think that there is a bit of jealousy I suppose, because teachers haven't got anywhere to work, they got the classroom but other people use the classroom or the kids are in there, so I am seem to be having a very elevated position, because I have got this office to myself. I've got my own PC, I can do what I want with it, and I think that is why if you are seeing to spend a lot of time at your desk do something that wasn't directly related to the school or your tasks of the day, they might say: "well, what are you doing there? You are obviously being paid too many hours you can do it in your own time
	Qualifying the time	<p>1: so if there is an issue, like with the uniform at my school at the moment, if I then spent a couple of hours within the forum and got report back and then say this is what a lot of other schools have done with the same issue, it might say we don't change, or it might say how we could change it and do it effectively, if you got that back, see the game from spending the time and possibly a lot less time than when you try to find these different reasons for using the forum again.</p> <p>LC: so there has to be a tangible output?</p> <p>1: there has to be something for the school directly.</p> <p>LC: basically it has to improve the output what you yourself could do in the same time?</p> <p>1: yes, there has to be benefit.</p>
	Building capacity	<p>2: I have a question about capacity. The givers give, but it is only as good as all the people that are going to join in, where does it start with building this group of which we keep talking about? It might be anything from five people to 5000 people so how are you going to go good together, get them to buy in. We will all buy in because we already sit here and we all think it is a bright idea because the practicalities, but how do you start to build that quality group that are going to join in be givers and takers and so that it is effectively. If it is successful then obviously people will join, but it starts with building the community and how do we start with it?</p> <p>4: you must need a minimum because match.com would be useless if there are only five people on it. It depends on the size and quality of the network.</p>
4	Expanding networks for SBMs	It shows at you after school are proactive, and when you said credible, because I know when we have forums, exactly as you said, it is a bit of bitching and whining, sometimes it is what you

		need, but that is very much what the teachers and headteachers think, what school business managers' forums are.
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Observations

Whilst the idea of the structure remains somewhat unclear to participants, the idea of a moderator was discussed at some length. Feelings were that someone 'totally independent' should be involved in supporting groups, though they should also be knowledgeable. One point raised was that a teacher (or retired teacher as suggested by a SF Software colleague) might have a 'slant' and interpret the discussion in a different way. One participant recommended that groups be shaped around shared themes or needs. Another suggestion was that the platform have publicly available data included in the platform to help participants with grant writing or other related work.

Participatory games/ Play session (Session 4)

The aim of the session was to explore and draw out further associations with gamification techniques based on results from the first focus group. The group worked as individuals (game of chance and the up-vote board) or a single team (jigsaw and dominoes) on all challenges.

Observations

Table with expanded game of chance

Participants were given a chance to enter a draw for a prize bag (no information shared on the content) for £1. Participants were not told how much the bag was worth or what the money would be used for (profit or charity). 7 of 11 (63.6%) participants chose to participate. After the result, the group was invited to have their money returned to them or to donate the monies to a charity—the group unanimously voted to donate the money.

Conclusions

Participation was lower in this version of chance as compared to the Nov 30 version, where 82% (n.9) chose to participate. Even with the stakes raised slightly, and no guarantee of a return on their investment, the majority of participants appeared content to take a small risk with the chance of a reward, though they only had a 14.2% chance of winning the prize.

Silent collaborative play: dominoes timed challenge

The entire group of participants and Pebble colleagues were invited to participate in the Dominoes Timed Challenge. Given specific limitations, the group had to build a preset pattern in a 5-minute limit whilst NOT speaking with each other. The goal was to explore the experience of a shared goal without verbal communication to support the activity. The group completed the challenge within the time limit, predominantly relying on hand gestures and eye contact to complete the task.

Despite their success, a number of participants mentioned great frustration at not being able to speak whilst completing the task. In session 5, one participant mentioned (6), 'I didn't like it that we weren't able to speak with the dominoes.' Another (4) said that 'no one really knew where to start'. The facilitator had not expected the group to achieve the challenge, but the entire group credited one member with leading them through it, which he credited to playing with his 5-year-old child. The group observed that they just followed the 'leader' during the process, without really knowing what was happening—as they could not confer with each other.

Conclusions

Frustrated sighs and body language suggested that the majority of the group did find the exercise frustrating. Whilst they could follow the default leader, 5, they expressed that they never knew what the final picture was meant to be and could not raise any questions or concerns along the way. Whilst this was a 'collaborative' exercise, it was intentionally designed to create pressure and a hindrance of no verbal communication. As compared with the next collaborative game, this was not the preferred approach of participants.

Non-silent collaborative play: timed jigsaw challenge

Participants were allowed to speak and then timed to see how fast they could complete a 250-piece jigsaw puzzle together. Whilst they were given 10 minutes, the group completed it in 19 minutes—upon their request. The group did speak with each other, but not very often. At times, team members looked and gave pieces to other members as they looked at the jigsaw's image in general. In Session 5, participants observed that they 'interacted with each other more' (9) and supported each other's building efforts.

For many, with a “jigsaw you know what finished looks like, whereas with the dominoes you don't know what the finished product is going to look like and where it's going to go and what changes can make, what directions it is going to go in.” (9).

Conclusions

The jigsaw puzzle, as in November, was a success. Participants appeared to genuinely enjoy completing the puzzle together and did take advantage of the ability to speak. There was little conversation, however, with the team members taking up areas of the puzzle and focusing on placing pieces. Some team members took up roles of support and oversight, offering pieces to other members and keeping an eye on overall progress. Whilst certain members took on specific roles, it did not appear that any one member was the leader.

Discussion

For participants, when comparing the two collaborative play experiences, perhaps (4) sums it up well: ‘I didn't like the way that if one [domino] fell down everything went. Like with a puzzle if you can't find a piece then not everything is destroyed, whereas with the stacking and there was a part and I didn't dare to put the Domino there. I did not want to be responsible for the cascade.’ For (1) dominoes ended up feeling more like a work project, ‘jigsaw was a complete success, we finished it and it was right. The dominoes sort of work-ish with a bit of fiddling around, not quite ring the bell I guess, so it wasn't hundred percent perfect.’

Finally, a question was raised in Session 5 about whether having a puzzle game (like a jigsaw) would be a welcome addition to the platform. The group appreciated the idea, but were dubious about how it would be perceived (as in not working, playing a game). One SF Software member suggested that the game itself might be useful if it had an overriding goal, such as a citizen science game, (8) ‘you mentioned games for like disease control, the game of chess came out as a wargame action plan for battles and war and I wonder if there's some functionality around it in that way. It will obviously look like a game, but it might have a benefit.’

Session 5

During this session, scenarios (of the kinds of financially related problems or challenges that might be experienced by schools) were discussed. See the Scenario section below where they have been integrated. The play session above includes comments made about the games during Session 5 (above).

A concern about **the perception that an SBM is not doing their job**, particularly in relation to technology, came up during the discussion. This was discussed in relation to the use of headphones at the desk:

8 ¹⁴	<u>I have [a] question... when the headteacher sees you sitting you wearing your headphones on and it doesn't look like you are doing your job, what I like to get an idea of is, is it perception or is it actually that instances of that have happened?</u>
1	I think there's a perception. ... when they come and see you, they are focused on what they are going to ask you, the affected you might have headphones on, sitting behind your PC, that probably won't even notice, because they are usually too focused on the job in hand, I think. But the perception is still there.
4	You know I started putting one in, and you know what, it helps me, because I share an office with four other people, and when I do things like payroll ... the last fortnight, deputy head came in, and I was actually listening to conversational [language] on YouTube, and I did feel I have to say this is how it helps me concentrate ...
9 ¹⁵	I've been school offices and have never ever seen a School business manager with headphones on.

Also, issues of **respect and exclusion** were also revisited during the final session, summing up session:

5	When they are free, they expect you to be sat there waiting, it doesn't matter if you're busy, they will stand there and wait for you to answer a question.
4	They don't have any idea what the other side does to make the school work. They also don't like the fact that we can have a drink at any time
5	They should just spend time with us in our office.
1	But Ofsted is a very good example of why school business managers haven't got any respect in schools, because they don't have anything to do with Ofsted. To a great extent, if Ofsted is in, I'm always like, if there's anything I can do please tell me.

Scenarios

A number of possible scenarios, that might warrant an SBM to use a financial efficiency platform, were documented and shared in various sessions during FG2. They are highlighted here for use in possible wireframing or product design going forward.

3	Difficult staff	I have got a narcissistic member of staff, an absolute
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¹⁴ Pebble colleague.

¹⁵ Pebble colleague.

	situations	nightmare to manage, but I would love to be interested in other colleagues that have a similar psycho, what tactics would you use?
5	HT buy-in	<p>8¹⁶: what do you need from the headteacher to get that buy in?</p> <p>5: lots of proof that something is wrong. If I'm honest, it is hard work, I need multiple meetings to prove that she is not right, she is very strong willed and opinionated.</p>
5	Dealing with HT/difficult conversations with HT	<p>7: it would be good to understand some of the scenarios that you have had, whether headteacher is being unwilling to take your advice.</p> <p>5: I have got one on the top of my head right now. She's trying to convince me that I need to budget for a new assistant head, whereas I am trying to convince her that we need to downsize the leadership team. Basically, she has got two people on the leadership team of which I think that they are not pulling their weight. I think if she managed them better, they would have a better outcome because they are paid well. Whereas her answers, just recruit somebody better.</p>
1	Approaches to handling difficult budget requests	We got the current headteacher at the moment, the staff, teaching staff, want to change the school uniform. Why do they want to change school uniform? Because we are fed up looking on lots of different blue jumpers. They're all different jumpers, some have been washed some haven't. So change school uniforms because teachers are fed up with the color blue? So I had to take a step back and think: "what is the reason for possibly not changing the school uniform?". All our letterheads have to change, but they had just listened to the staff and wants to please them, because they are fed up, because the main problem of primary school teachers is that there students have blue jumpers. And if they wanted to change jumpers to orange with black spots, that would be fantastic and they would teach much better than.
1, 11, 5	Building professionalism and prestige for SBMs; improving rapport between SBMs and rest of school; support for SBMs on non-teaching duties (audits, etc.)	<p>11: but Ofsted is a very good example of why school business managers haven't got any respect in schools, because they don't have anything to do the Ofsted. To a great extent, if Ofsted is in, I'm always like, if there's anything I can do please tell me.</p> <p>5: [sarcastic tone] the same when you are audited, the whole school asks if they can help.</p> <p>1: that is the real divide, business manager have an awful lot to do throughout the year, yes you make the system setup, your single central record, but very little because it</p>

¹⁶ Pebble colleague.

		is concentrate, as it should be the classroom and on the teachers. So Ofsted doesn't affect school business managers.
4	Insight into areas of expertise (payroll, finance, LAs, etc.)	I am asked and I have asked a lot of questions about when people want to pull out of local authority, SLAs, payroll. ... It is the same with other things like cleaning contracts, so the things that relied on local authority to do, ... things like that. Health and safety questions.
1	FOI requests	Some guidance at how we could possibly club together because I don't think they're actually wanting freedom of information requests from each individual school really, it is all to do with safeguarding etcetera. We can help each other by saying how did you answer top six questions and try and give some sort of response to each other, I didn't know how to answer it, I did not know what it meant, but if we can do it together, it cuts down the work for everybody rather than everybody puzzling how to fill in ten pages of information that is to be done. So again it is collaboration.
5	CPD for SBMs	CPD on the support staff side, because there is not really a niche for that right now.

Discussion

Wireframing considerations

Based on overall observations from the discussions, the group appeared open to there being more interactive elements in the tool; that a tool that facilitated interaction and contact would be well received, but there was concern about how it would be perceived by leadership in their schools. Video mechanisms were positively received, but the group appeared to prefer that they be optional rather than required. Mention of sites like match.com were raised as examples of how schools could be partnered up to support each other on similar financial challenges or opportunities. The wider functionality of the tool itself was questioned, including how it differs from existing forums or tools. More discussion of these findings appears in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

Attendees appeared happy to return to the focus group setting three months after the first meeting, despite some having long journeys, and remained engaged in the discussions throughout the day. Conversation often carried over into breaks and lunch.

Moving forward, the focus group concluded with the participants being willing to continue to support the project by helping to test and provide additional feedback to

Pebble once wireframing has been completed. And in the days following FG2, participants were checking in with each other using the Whatsapp group set up after FG1 (19 messages were posted to the group within the two weeks after FG2).

Chapter 7: Discussion of findings and design considerations

Introduction

This chapter discusses the overall findings from the earlier chapters (Chapters 3-6) which presented the results of the surveys, the school business manager focus groups, and the headteacher interviews. The chapter first reflects on the methodologies undertaken to carry out the research and then focuses predominantly on what elements may inform wireframing and general application design considerations based on these findings.

Reflecting on the methodological approaches

Survey

A survey was distributed under schools to obtain basic knowledge of participants' values and outlooks before the start of a focus group on topics on the organisational culture and financial health and efficiency within schools. It was chosen to use the OCAI survey (Cameron & Quinn, 2006), as it is a reliable and valid survey to study the organisational culture within school (Cameron & Ettington, 1988; Lavine, et al, 2008; Trice & Beyer, 1993). However, the feedback on this survey was that it was inappropriate for a school setting. In hindsight, it can be acknowledged that many 'business terms' are used in this survey that might be alien to people working within schools. Hence, the low number of respondents to this survey can be explained. Consequently, the results of the OCAI are not published in this report. Instead, a second survey was developed.

The second survey was received more positively, which resulted in over twice as much completing this survey compared to the OCAI. However, still only 49 participants completed this survey. This might be due to the way the survey was distributed: a phone call was made to the schools in order to introduce our research project. It was the intention to explain the research project directly to the headteacher and to get their approval to distribute the survey under the members of the senior leadership team of that specific school. However, it was found difficult to get to speak to the headteacher and often the personal assistant of the headteacher advised to send an email with all information. On most emails we sent we did not get a response, even after one or two follow up phone calls and a reminder via email. Despite this relatively small number of participants that completed the survey, the

survey proved to be beneficial for the structure and content that was discussed in the focus groups.

School business manager focus groups

The decision to undertake a focus group approach for this research project was to take advantage of the methodology's ability to draw out substantial and in-depth responses in the target audience's own words (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2007). It was also seen as a means to facilitate the participatory approach that underpinned the research's scope (Macnaghten and Myers, 2004) and to help carry forward the preliminary findings from both sets of pilot surveys conducted between October 2006 and January 2017. Whilst the focus group approach does have limitations as far as limited numbers of participants and problems with the facilitative process being susceptible to cues or bias (Barbour, 2007), on the whole it did allow for a means to connect, in a relatively short period of time, with a selected representation of a key target cohort for the prototype and its eventual platform in an in-depth and qualitatively rich way. The focus group model also allowed for an experimentation with play-based methodologies to understand how and which gamification techniques might be effectively integrated into the design of the platform.

Seven school business managers participated in the focus groups¹⁷. On the whole, the format and structure of the focus groups was a success. Attendees appeared engaged and enthusiastic, often willing to share a personal anecdote or observation in relation to topics raised. Even during breaks and lunch, the conversation appeared to continue between participants. When informally asked, none of the seven SBMs had participated in a focus group before, though by the end of the first focus group, one participant did mention to the lead facilitator that it had felt a bit more like therapy than what they had expected a focus group to feel like.

Overall, there appeared to be a degree of sociality and positive engagement that exceeded the framework of the day itself. A few areas to evidence this was the request—made by the SBM group—to remain in contact between the two events and the post-event offer, by one of the SBMs, to engage her local SBM professional support group (located in the Northwest and 80-member strong) in additional activities surrounding the research project, including wireframing. All focus group

¹⁷ For the second focus group, one participant was unable to attend due to illness.

participants were willing to participate in wireframe testing post-focus group activity (in April and May 2017). As of this writing, the focus group participants have continued to communicate over a Whatsapp group that was set up after the November 2016 focus group.

On reflection, one area of improvement relates to improving the integration of the Pebble project team members into the focus group day. The first focus group demonstrated that having participants looking at laptops with Pebble staffers was less effective and caused confusion. It appeared that participants may have misunderstood that the discussion surrounding pre-existing software was not about its marketability or saleability, but more about its design and functionality (to feed into the discussion around digital technologies). To remedy this, during the second focus group the research team opted to invite the Pebble to participate in a group discussion around technologies and the reaction to Ryan Green's presentation. This segued more naturally into the second part of the focus group day and the participatory activities.

On the whole, the focus group model worked well in support of the research work of this project as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of specific themes in a focused manner with a specific cohort, such as school business managers. Having two subsequent focus groups with the same cohort was also an opportune way to further explore issues carried forward from the first one and to perpetuate the cohesion and supportive structure that was developed through the first focus group. This is further evidenced by the willingness of participants to support Pebble with wireframe testing and feedback going forward.

Play and game sessions

Possibly the most surprising and welcome finding from the research was the general success of the gameplay sessions. For the lead facilitator (who design the games) the group was engaged and prepared to participate in gameplay, actually exceeding the expectations of the research team. Some activities do need some adjustment going forward, such as the timed silent collaboration challenge (which was too long).

By engaging the potential users in not only responding to questions about their impressions of gamification and a gamified product but asking them to actively envision and help shape what the tool itself might be, this will better adhere to de-

Marcos et al's (2014) warning that applying the 'gamify it and they will be motivated' approach will not necessarily result in success, and could facilitate longer, more sustainable engagement with the tool going forward, which could counteract what Koivisto and Hamari (2014) have observed about engagement levels in online tools dropping once the novelty of gamification wears off.

Headteacher interviews

There were problems pulling the headteachers together for a focus group model to parallel the approach undertaken with the SBMs. Despite three attempts, the focus group model was abandoned in favour of a series of phone interviews to ensure that data was collected from this important cohort during the course of the project research phase. It should be noted that whilst a change from focus group format to in-depth interviews means that the headteacher-related data does not have parity with the data generated with the school business managers in November 2016, it did allow for a means by which to explore issues with a cohort that appeared to struggle to commit an entire day to the originally designed focus group format. The resulting information provided added insight that would have otherwise been unavailable. For future application, consideration should be paid to adapting the research approach to the cohorts being interviewed, including offering to interview in person, via the telephone, or during non-teaching periods.

Overall, the participants appeared engaged and happy to respond to the questions. There was a general orientation toward financial innovation and participants appeared enthusiastic about sharing their approach. As with the focus group participants, interviewees were also happy to provide additional feedback on the prototype wireframing after the research cycle had concluded.

Design and wireframing considerations

The following considerations are offered to further develop the tool:

1. **Include a sharing/community forum.** A social network function (forum, chat, or a discussion 'wall') would be welcome, and appreciated from a professional point of view.
2. **Extend the possibility of a tool which has internal and external facing elements.** School leadership may benefit from a tool which enables internal communication and sharing, whilst may also enjoy that wider community support and communication which could be mediated.

3. **Tracking mechanism to compare performance against wider field (internally accessible).**
4. **Tone/style of tool could evoke the student-centred mind-set that resonates with this cohort.** Moral imperative and significance of education appears a key driver to this cohort. Building this in through examples of good practice and value driven work that is student-focused could be useful. This could be unlocked details or insights that pop up once schools get more 'achievements'.
5. **Extending the forum area further to include a 'best practices' pool: participants could receive achievements/rewards** for sharing best practices around innovative funding approaches or ways to improve their school.
6. **Make the gamification elements resemble puzzler or solitaire style games; rely on 'traditional' or conventional game styles (board games, puzzles, etc.).** Participants identified little regular engagement with complex digital games, though have played one-off games, such as puzzlers or solitaire type games. **Gamification elements could be more appreciated if they resemble these styles of games rather than more conventional casual games or digital/video games.**
7. **Feedback mechanisms to provide users signals on progress made, points/rewards for participation, and possibly a leaderboard/scoreboard.** Gamification is becoming more familiar in the school setting for educational support. Particularly in relation to **feedback mechanisms. This could be carried into the tool.**
8. **Consider adding in an actual game: a puzzler or point and click game.** This cohort reported being open to games, but often too busy to engage. For a number, though, play is a means to unwind and clear their heads. A possible game could be considered, such as a puzzle or word game, as a reward in and of itself. Brain teasers. No annoying ads, no cost—just a game as its own reward.

Bridging observations from play and games toward design considerations

- Games and play appeared appealing to participants and gave them a chance to connect and socialise in a way that de-formalises the focus group process.

- There are areas emerging where gamification techniques could be of benefit to this cohort and ways in which supportive or collaborative work might appeal. More exploration of how the various techniques will come to be in an actual work-facing tool was identified for the next focus group to allow for further fine tuning.
- The lead researcher's recommendation is that a variety of levels of gamification and a range of techniques be applied to allow for participants to engage with it at a level that they feel comfortable. For some, for example, **a framework to nurture and support personal expertise** may be preferable for some; elements of **a professional social network** may be beneficial for some; whilst for others, the idea of an **externalised network working toward a shared goal** (with key milestones and achievements for reaching it) may be more meaningful. One observation the lead researcher made after the play session ended was the *'idea of gamification designed around two networks in the same platform: internal and external.'* A consideration of the personal, professional, and inter-professional/inter-organizational may be ways in which to position and embed various gamification elements, with the ability for each area to fluidly overlap. For example, the tool could have both a forum and chat mechanism, a shared goal area (schools join in together to raise funds, etc.) where schools are rewarded for their idea-sharing.

Wireframing design considerations

- A tool that considers intra-organisational communication (internal) as well as interschool (external).
- Social mechanisms for support and engagement (gamification technique)
- Shared collaborative mechanisms: shared goals, completed in their own way (gamification)
- Gamification based on positive and collaborative principles
- Means to track individual financial development and compare against wider field
- Flexible design to allow for adding in or removing features (for those more or less technically oriented)
- The group appeared open to more interactive elements being included in a platform—including the idea of a desktop 'PA'.

- Video mechanisms need to be optional rather than required. Participants felt uncomfortable with being on video (requiring this could put some off). The perception of video conferencing is fine, but might prefer to be hidden or just audio for conference calls.
- Forums, chat mechanisms, databases, support structures were all mentioned as possible elements to include.
- Match.com (or other pairing up/partnering type sites) were used as reference points for how groups might be brought together—over shared thematic interests or based on similar demographics/type of school.
- Links beyond the local/regional was well received.
- Access to data in support of work going forward would be well received.
- Questions about the look and feel of the
- Collaborative approaches should be based around a clear vision for completion.
- A concern was expressed over the perception of non-school matters interfering with school work time and how that might appear—the platform may need a design consideration for that. Too playful or non-professional may give the wrong impression.
- The group was open to the use of advertising to support or reduce the cost of the platform, though would need to be appropriate. The group was also open to a forum or area to help share recommendations or tips on vetted/approved tradespeople or resources.
- The design needs to feel professional (appropriate); including an actual game or obvious ‘gamification’ elements could be misunderstood by onlookers (but an app on the phone could include something like that)
- There was less certainty regarding how the platform itself is structured and questions about how reciprocal and fair the team approach would be as far as time commitments.
- Moderators for the platform need to be similar in background to SBMs (there was reaction against the engagement of [retired] teachers functioning as moderators) or a Pebble staff member.

- The participants don't just want a chatting/venting tool/platform, they want it to be structured, helpful. We envision the platform as an active support mechanism—which gives more than just a local meeting.
- Interest in seeing how this will appear and behave differently from other platforms, including how it is different from existing products that also offer a forum and support.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This work has provided preliminary insights about the financial health of schools in England and their organisational culture and leadership. The research also aimed to understand not only the professional and contextual factors that might impact on financial efficiency but also to draw out insights around what features of gamification could be built into the prototyped financial efficiency software to facilitate greater adoption and engagement with the end user: school leaders such as school business managers and headteachers who have financial oversight responsibility for their schools' budgets and income generation. Input into the design and scope of the project was provided by Pebble and the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL).

Over the course of a six-month period, the research team was able to capture insights about these themes using a mixed methods approach across a number of different cohorts: school business managers through the focus group model; headteachers through phone interviews; and two surveys, one with a larger, target of schools across the region, and another with a smaller group of schools and college leaders. The team worked closely with Pebble to help shape and design the scope of the research project and to adapt its approach to support the developing themes that emerged as the project progressed from the first survey through to the focus group process. This allowed the team to embrace the participatory research approach concept from the start—to not only secure the participation and engagement of SBMs and headteachers, but also to embed the participation of Pebble's software design team itself during the scope of the research phase.

Overall, the insights here provide a number of important perspectives on the challenges and opportunities faced by schools and their leadership in relation to financial efficiency, organisational culture and digital technology. It appears clear that for all school leaders, an orientation toward student support and the moral value of education remain a motivating factor within their organisations. A perception that schools were more focused on results and achievements than enterprise education was supported by some participants.

For many participants, school business manager and headteacher alike, financial health was a concern, with a number expressing uncertainty about their school's ability to remain financially solvent in the coming years. Financial innovation around income generation was a clearly expressed attribute amongst many of the participants, particularly the headteachers interviewed. Overall, the participants were all interested in working with other schools—particularly those out of their local area—to learn from and improve their own financial efficiency practices. A significant finding from the focus groups was that school business managers often feel isolated in their roles and not always well integrated into ongoing leadership activities in their respective schools. A few also expressed a concern that their professional contributions may be underutilised in their setting due to many of them not coming from a teaching background. For most, the ideal SBM role included involvement in the school's leadership team and authority and respect for their financial management skills and background. For some, the ability to connect with and work with others in similar roles across England, appeared a welcome opportunity—an important supportive structure that could be built into a digital financial efficiency platform going forward.

There was a more mixed perception of digital technology with the two primary cohorts—school business managers and headteachers. With the SBMs, comfort with and acceptance of technology appeared to follow generational (and possibly gender) lines, with the older participants (four, all female) being less comfortable or willing to adopt new technologies, whilst the younger participants (two male, one female) were all more open and supportive of it. With the headteacher cohort (six, all male), there was a positive orientation toward adopting and using technology, particularly in relation to working in schools. All the participants were aware of and engaged with social media in some form, but there was a mixed approach to its use in professional contexts (this tended to be more the case with headteachers than SBMs) and in a personal capacity.

A surprising but welcome development related to the study of gamification. The team opted to use a series of designed games, along Caillouis' (1958) taxonomy of games and informed by Hamari, Koivisto, and Sarsa's (2014) framework for gamification, to learn what elements of gameplay appealed to (and repelled) the participants. On the whole, the focus group participants welcomed the games, even continuing to play

some games when the time had run out. The main findings from the study indicate that while participants enjoyed many types of games, they preferred the experience of cooperative play with a shared goal in mind (such as a jigsaw puzzle) and the ability to express performance and excellence through solo play games. Whilst gamification techniques drawn from play such as forums, cooperative team work, and chat mechanisms were seen as possible elements of a digital platform, these should veer toward the compassionate rather than competitive in scale, with elements of gamification being professional in style and feel.

When considering the nature and scope of a digital platform, participants welcomed the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from a shared platform that could partner or group schools together with similar challenges. There was a positive reaction toward a tool that not only facilitated collaboration but also provided a collected database of useful financial and performance data to facilitate improved financial efficiency; one that felt like a 'PA' of sorts. There was a general openness and enthusiasm for the idea of a mentoring or facilitative platform, but some concern about how it might be perceived if participants were seen to be spending work time helping other schools while receiving little support in return. There was a mixed reception to the idea of a videoconferencing tool, though more acceptance of a conferencing/chat mechanism that participants could opt in or out of.

Overall, there appears to be a gap in the market for a digital platform or tool that enables school leadership with financial oversight and management responsibility to connect, learn from and support each other toward increasing financial innovation. Based on the small sample of 13 interviewees and focus group participants, it's evident that schools are embracing innovation and enterprise in their approach to improved income generation and financial efficiency—from sharing costs with other schools to consultancies and property letting. These critical pockets and examples of innovation would benefit even further from widening connections with each other that allow for greater efficiency and innovation that will support their important educational work for years to come.

Appendices

Appendix A. OCAI questionnaire

The OCAI consists of six items. Each item has four alternatives. Divide 100 points among these four alternatives, depending on the extent to which each alternative is similar to your own organisation. Give a high number of points to the alternative that is most similar to your own organisation. Just be sure that your total equals 100 for each item. Complete the column 'Now' to assess the current situation in your organization. After you have completed the 'Now' column, please rate your organization as you think it should be in five years in order to be spectacularly successful. Write your responses in the 'Preferred' column.

1. Dominant Characteristics	Now	Preferred
A. The organisation is a very personal space. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.		
B. The organisation is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their neck out and take risks.		
C. The organisation is very results-oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.		
D. The organisation is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.		

2. Organisational leadership	Now	Preferred
A. The leadership in the organisation is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.		
B. The leadership in the organisation is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovation, or risk taking.		
C. The leadership in the organisation is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, result-oriented focus.		
D. The leadership in the organisation is generally considered to exemplify coordination, organising, or smooth running efficiency.		

3. Management of Employees	Now	Preferred
A. The management style in the organisation is characterised by teamwork, consensus, and participation.		
B. The management style in the organisation is characterised by individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.		
C. The management style in the organisation is characterised by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.		
D. The management style in the organisation is characterised by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.		

4. Organisation glue	Now	Preferred
A. The glue that holds the organisation together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organisation runs high.		
B. The glue that holds the organisation together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.		
C. The glue that holds the organisation together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.		
D. The glue that holds the organisation together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organisation is important.		

5. Strategic Emphases	Now	Preferred
A. The organisation emphasises human development. High trust, openness and participation persist.		
B. The organisation emphasises acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.		
C. The organisation emphasises competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.		
D. The organisation emphasises permanence and stability. Efficiency, control, and smooth operations are important.		

6. Criteria of success	Now	Preferred
A. The organisation defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.		
B. The organisation defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.		
C. The organisation defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing competition. Competitive market leadership is key.		
D. The organisation defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost production are critical.		

Appendix B. Enhanced survey developed by Ewan Ingleby

Question 1:

Which of the following statements do you 'strongly agree with', 'agree with', 'neither agree nor disagree with', 'disagree with', or 'strongly disagree with'? Please tick your preference in relation to your school's priority areas below.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree/disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A key priority in the school is its strong pastoral focus and an emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of the students and other individuals who are associated with the school.					
A key priority in the school is its emphasis on 'enterprise education'- in other words, the school encourages 'different and not just conventional thinking' (Guildford 1967; Raven 1985).					
A key priority in the school is a continual emphasis on examination and assessment results.					
A key priority in the school is to maintain a hierarchical organisation and management structure.					
The financial health of the school is good.					

Question 2:

Please rank the importance of the following to your school in numerical order (with 1 as 'most important' through to 4 as 'least important', using each number only once).

	Rank
Successful examination/assessment results	
The pastoral welfare of everyone associated with the school	
The importance of enterprise education	
The school's management structure	

Question 3:

Please state whether the following statements apply to your school.

	Yes	No
Does a strong pastoral focus make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?		
Does enterprise education make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?		
Does a continual emphasis on examination/assessment results make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?		
Does a hierarchical organisation and management structure make a positive contribution to your school's organisational culture?		

Appendix C. Questions and Themes Explored During the Focus Groups with School Business Managers and Phone Interviews with Headteachers

Focus Group 1 (November 2016).

Session 1: Leadership and organizational culture

Intro

1. Tell us a bit about your school—what is it like?
2. How would you describe its culture and leadership style?

Explore

3. What do you think has particularly contributed to this culture and leadership style?
4. How do you feel about its culture?
5. How do you feel about the leadership style?
6. Do you think there are any aspects to the culture and leadership that make doing some things easier/better? If so, what are they?
7. Do you think there are any that make it harder to get some things done? If so, what are they?

Conclude

8. If there anything you would like to share about your thoughts on culture and leadership?

Session 2: Financial health and barriers

Intro

1. How would you describe the financial health of your school?

Explore

2. Please share examples of any innovative approaches to improving your financial health undertaken by your school.
3. Does your school use any digital financial management tools? If so, what are they?
4. Do you and your colleagues find it easy or challenging to deal with the budget/financial matters at your school? Why do you think that is?
5. Can you identify any barriers to adopting new techniques that might help you improve your financial health, such as bake sales, sponsorships, fundraisers, crowdfunding? Where do you think that is coming from?

Conclude

6. Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on financial health?

Session 3: Digital technologies

Discuss technology generally

1. What type of tech and software do you use? How do you feel about adopting new software/tech?

Explore—digital software/Arro (slide show) [play around with the software]

2. (reacting to the software) What do you like/dislike about the software?
3. How does/would using software like this, as part of your daily practice, feel? Would that be manageable?

Exploring technology and games, social media, online resources (slide show)

4. Type of experience with digital technology in general? (at home, etc)
5. Please describe examples of ways you use social media, rewards, chat, forums, games, etc. What do you like about them? What do you hate?

Conclude

6. Any final thoughts on technology and its impact on your life and work?

Headteacher interviews (February 2017)

Leadership and culture:

Intro

1. Tell us a bit about your school—what is it like?

Explore

1. How would you describe your school's culture?
2. What is your leadership style? What training have you received in relation to leadership?
3. What is your relationship with your SBM like?

Conclude

4. If there anything else you would like to share about your thoughts on culture and leadership?

Financial health and barriers

Intro

1. How would you describe the financial health of your school?

Explore

2. Please share examples of any innovative approaches to improving your financial health undertaken by your school.
3. Does your school use any digital financial management tools? If so, what are they?

Conclude

4. Are there any other thoughts you would like to share on financial health?

Technologies and games

Discuss technology generally

1. If you could come up with one word to describe your perception of technology, what would it be?
2. What type of tech and software do you use? How do you feel about adopting new software/tech?

Exploring technology and games, social media, online resources (slide show)

3. Type of experience with digital technology in general? (at home, etc.)
4. Please describe examples of ways you use social media, rewards, chat, forums, etc. What do you like about them? What do you hate?
5. Do you play games? If so, what kind and what do you feel about them?
6. Are you familiar with gamification? If so, what is your opinion of it?

Conclude

7. Any final thoughts on technology and its impact on your life and work?

Focus Group 2 (February 2017)

Session 1: Leadership and Organisational Culture Revisited

1. With regards leadership and leadership style, what is your thinking about the pressures that are present in the school and potentially leadership styles could change to meet the needs of students and staff in the future?
2. Do you feel that enterprise education is represented in your school? If so, how?

Session 2: Ryan's Presentation and Reaction

1. Please write down one-word to describe your initial reaction to Ryan's presentation and then elaborate on your choice.

Session 3: Exploring Ryan's Presentation Further and Digital Technology/Social Media Expanded Further

1. Have you had any further thoughts about Ryan's presentation, based on what we shared earlier?
2. What would incentivise you or retain your interest in a platform like this one?
3. What elements of design or structure (interface, forums, chat options, videoconferencing) would you prefer?
4. What level of commitment would work in a platform like this?

5. How do you feel about videoconferencing as an element of the tool?

Session 5: Reacting to the Play Session and Final Thoughts/Moving Forward

1. What scenarios could you think of where a platform such as we've discussed may be useful?
2. Is there anything else from earlier that you might like to share?
3. How did you feel about the games you played? (*from the play session*)
4. How did you feel about the limitations imposed on you in those games? Which game did you prefer?
5. Could you see any games being part of a work-based platform?

Appendix D: Transcription of Focus Group at Pebble (SF Software Ltd.)

Session1

EI ¹⁸	..the sorts of things that make up their organisational culture. Of course the four of you are very insightful with regards to that. There are two parts to the first bit of this discussion. It is something that I am also interested in with being in our education sector at the University and I have had a lot of time where I have taught teachers and where I have been in schools and I have seen sorts of things that are going on. We are interested in the theme of leadership styles and I wanted to open up as a conversation point really about the sorts of leadership styles that you've observed when you have contact with schools, that is the first part of this. What sort of leadership styles the senior schools?
1	Massively varied, I would start by saying. Everything from teams that work well collaboratively with each other and people who find it exhilarating to be part of the team like that, all the way through to school business managers who feel totally unsupported by either their heads or the governors or both and isolated as a consequence of that.
2	From my perspective, leadership styles, regardless whether we are talking about the headteacher or a chair of governors or the school business manager, whoever is driving in that school is very reactive rather than proactive, so it is across the bridge when it comes or when the school burns down then we will worry about it, but right now it hasn't happened so just let's hang fire, that is very much the perspective I get on a day-to-day basis.
3	They are probably leaning towards a hierarchical kind of leadership structure and a lack of planning. Being reactive to stuff that happens. We sometimes go to a school where they actually are really proactive and where they do that kind of planning kind of things but they are probably the minority.
1	All we engage with the minority of those schools.
EI	It is interesting as well, have you have experiences, when I think of leadership styles, when I have spoken to some teachers who have gone into teaching, they like teaching because they can be charismatic leaders, they can influence students, they could influence staff, that could be an example of a leadership style where personal charisma leads the school through whatever eventualities I just wondered if you have noticed that, different types of leadership style?
2	I think it is difficult to understand what that kind of leadership is over the phone in like half an hour to an hour of consultation, because they are not very much answering the questions you have but very much telling you what it is what you want to hear sometimes, so I think how they are portraying themselves, it is not clear whether they are charismatic or not.
1	I have met some charismatic heads.
3	I was going to say, we have met some, but it is usually when we are face-to-face, [names a headteacher], he is a prime example of a charismatic leader, very much focused on the education side of things,

¹⁸ Teesside facilitator.

	being charismatic for his team and for his pupils.
1	Then on the other side of the scale is this lovely lady, [Name], who works in [name of city], who has a headteacher who is autocratic, pretending to be fostering a team environment, but then wasn't empowering for the school business manager.
4	I think as well you can see in the work that the schools do with us and the level of the collaboration they have with us whether or not they do have a sort of a proactive charismatic leadership style or whether they have a very autocratic leadership style. Because often, I work with school business managers or bursars and very often certain things that we would like to do together has to be constantly approved or ran by the leadership team, or the headteacher, which can be sort of a blocker.
3	Yes, we get quite a lot of that. Where somebody said: the head told me to do this, my head won't let me do this, I can't do this letter get approval from my headteacher and head of governors.
1	It is always possible people play that good cop bad cop card.
2	Yes, very much. The conversation we have is: I am very much like: okay, have I fully understood her needs and she has put it in front of the headteacher and the headteacher has come back and said no or has she told me what I want to hear over the course of half an hour to get the corn out of the way and use the headteacher as an excuse to say no?
EI	I think what is interesting as well is that whether the leadership style which almost mushrooms out of the ground or whether leadership styles are being followed by training, because I know that it can be thought given to leadership, you can become a particular type of leader, there is the philosophy behind that, I think what we are interested in is whether that is happening in schools in your experience, or do you think those people have just been true to themselves, that they are autocratic? That example were somebody was autocratic, is a person just like that or do you think there is a vision of leadership style in the schools?
4	I think that with sort of more academies being created and lots of changes happening within the education sector, an autocratic style of leadership is becoming more common because perhaps there is so much to get through, so many changes to take on board, people see it is easier to be autocratic and say.
EI	It is interesting that you mentioned that because that is the second part of this question, about the variation of leadership styles across the various schools sectors. What would be a difference in leadership style in some of the other schools, what sort of things have you noticed in the primary sector, the secondary sector? I have had that experience as well where I met a head of an Academy who had to be a particular person to hold it together, what would be maybe some of the other examples of different styles of leadership according to those various types of schools that perhaps you encountered?
1	I think minimally, but we do see some examples of democratic leaders where everybody in the management team seems to be speaking the same language, so we see some evidence of democratic leadership, but I'm not able to identify it with the school type specifically.
EI	It sounds quite ad hoc, it happens here, it can happen there, there is not

	a category of leader that confounds the primary schools of secondary schools.
1	I don't think so there is a growing category of leaders, as we have just explored, attaching to academies and they are more businesslike and focused and commercially driven. I am sure they still have appropriate school values and visions, but they seem too often surrounded themselves with people from a commercial background in their team, which doesn't have to be bigger, because people take more responsibilities.
EI	do you feel that they are on a mission to do great things?
All	yes.
99 ¹⁹	Gives an example of an Academy with a very strict policy.
1	I don't know whether my experience can map onto that, because I don't really know how it manifests across pupils, we only really get to see how it manifests itself on the senior leadership team that we handle.
EI	The second bit we want to explore is about organisational culture. What we are looking for are the key factors that are shaping how those schools are, what they are driven by, what they are seeking to achieve, and what some of obstacles are in achieving those objectives. So what other things you have noticed with respect organisational culture in schools?
4	I think they are certainly driven by money, because of all the cuts. I think a lot of the obstacles they face, one of the obstacles they face and we discuss it quite regularly, but what we not necessarily see as an obstacle, but what a lot of schools do is the lack of time and they have to obtain the money that is one of the key drivers. I think most schools are just wanting to achieve, most schools we work with, want to achieve financial stability. That is what we found, people within the school that we work with can seem overwhelmed by that and sort of unsure how to tackle that.
EI	With regards to this last point, do you think this is the case according to a specific school environment, so it is a cultural aspect school right across the board?
3	I think it depends on the school environment, I think different types of schools are probably more driven by the financial side of things than others. I think across the board all schools are driven by decide to do what is best for the kids and the challenges they face with that is balancing all the other stuff that goes with it. So the headteachers are in the main driven by doing by what is best for the kids. That is the key thing that is driving the main decisions they make. It is probably different when you start getting into academies, with an Academy trust and stuff like that you actually start to be driven by something different which is more of a businesslike.
EI	It seems like a clash of cultures, not a uniform culture across the board.
1	There is uniform desire for education to be at the forefront of everything, to have the excellence in that. It is harder to get to them when you ask them about their vision and to describe anything that is much more specific than that. That is certainly a common factor within the

¹⁹ Teesside University staff member

	organisation, I don't know if it informs the culture. It is a shared purpose, but I don't know if it informs the culture. I can sometimes see examples of the blame culture in schools.
EI	Where do you think that comes from?
1	I think it comes from a lack of support or a lack of, although people might have a shared vision they might not all pull together in the same direction, I think it sometimes comes directly in relation to experiences and speaking to the business manager. From those people of who we know have been given for example income generation or the resurrection of some premise or something as a project to work on, but then found themselves unsupported when it comes to well what actually means in terms of what we need to do in order to get this off the ground. Then it all becomes a bit too close to home really. There is definitely a culture of being able to put your head in the sand. There is definitely a culture of the able to sometimes just tick a box.
EI	So it is going against the innovative creative thinking outside the box, where do you think that comes from?
3	It goes back to reactive stuff that [Name] was talking about. I think it is part of the historical culture of the education sector, like any other public sector, where the government sets budgets, sets agendas, and the leadership and staff school react to those things.
1	And see themselves accountable for education rather than financial management, especially outside multi-Academy trust's.
2	If we go back to the original question, which was the school's vision, so when [name] was talking about primarily the discussions we have, it comes across as the school would like to be financially successful and be able to maintain a healthy income so they don't have to worry about deficit budgets being able to fund projects, making redundancies et cetera. They just want the income. And what [name] said, it is not about the money, it is about kids, the money is just factored in. There are partnerships in development at this precise moment, it is not about the money, they don't want to be seen as making a profit or working hard to make money, they want to be the centre of the community, they would be involved in the community people, rather than asking them for money. On the other hand, I have a headteacher in London who was about purchasing services to give it to the children so children are responsible for a certain part of fundraising. Every school is completely different. And I speak to about 30 to 50 per day. I don't think you can put a label on the culture in primary or secondary schools, everybody is completely different.

Session 2

LC ²⁰	...the kind of barriers there are in place to sort of impair people's abilities greater financial health. So I suppose one thing I was wondering about is, in general, when you think about schools that are active engaging with financial health, there might be a kind of stereotypical school that matches that profile, is that something you have observed or is it again totally varied?
1	Yes, it is totally varied, what do you think [2]?

²⁰ Teesside facilitator.

2	<p>Yes, it is varied, the best example I can give if there is a typical school that does wants to engage in income generation, they come to you and the very first question they ask is: how do I start with any income generation, because I know it is something I need to do but I don't know what it looks like. They know they need to generate income and some schools even come to us and say: I don't understand what income generation is but I know I need to raise money, which is the same thing. They don't understand the terminology, so they come to us and they say: I know I need to raise additional income and I know I want to generate income, but I don't know how to. So I suppose that is a typical, they can be put in that specific category of that customer that knows what they want to achieve but don't know how. But it can be absolutely varied, there can be customers that say: I don't know that we need to do income generation, I need to talk to the headteacher about whether it is on our agenda. How can funding and income generation not be on your agenda? There are two categories.</p>
1	<p>Did you mean the type of school [0]?</p>
LC	<p>Not specifically the type of school, but I was thinking about the mindset of the school, because you guys have used some interesting terminology that schools either tend to be more oriented to the historical roots of schools in the UK, as opposed to, or schools that want to be the heart of the community, would they be less or more interested in income generation, or would they be more apprehensive about it? Then also the idea of the autocratic style as opposed to the ones that use this the perception or the defense styles of approval. Do you think that that, or I mean again, just reflecting back to what I heard you say, issues around academies and is there something around that is different, more to the front of the agenda as opposed to more the traditional school?</p>
1	<p>When I think about [name] yesterday, he is from a Catholic high school for girls, as an example, he was the most forthcoming with detailed and precise information about their financial position then I have come across, before I even got as far as saying what I needed and said that I needed information about your financial standing, I got we are £490,000 worth in debt, which needs to be paid back over such and such, it was for this, we have borrowed for this, this is where the shortfall for this year is, this is where we expect our projected loss to be by the end of year three, and I knew everything inside out. As the school business manager that is absolutely fantastic. I know we lose most of our brightest students when they go to 6th form, all of this kind of masses information which barely says "I fully understands the financial problems that our school is experiencing and I need your help with right now ". To the group of people we had in this room including [school name], when they all said, well we like to learn in a collaborative environment, and yes of course we all need to do income generation, and they were as school from [city], a school from the North East, all of them with very different leadership structures I presume, although we didn't talk about it, but one of the questions I asked in that meeting was: given that the potential is that your school could close if you don't become financially sustainable in the future, what is the rocket going off on your backside that makes you actually make this a priority? And they all kind of looked</p>

	at me like it would never happen because the government will look after it. There is like, I cannot find a correlation between different leadership styles, although I haven't looked at it in relation to the leadership style.
LC	So, it is almost like there is not a big enough rocket?
3	Yes, I think the schools that are actually interested in financial health and efficiency and income generation have all kind of have a catalyst to be interested in it. That might be us, but for some it will be conversion to academy, because suddenly your finances become much more transparent. It could be because it is something that kind of on the agenda, that they think they need to engage with it to tick a box, it could be because they have had a hefty deficit in the budget, which means that they actually had to do something about this now, but I don't think there is a specific type that engages with that, I think something needs to happen to make them want to do it.
4	A common theme I have found is when speaking to a multi-Academy trust, all of the academies are not at trust level, all of the academies will refuse to take responsibility for income generation and finances because the trust will deal with that. So if I have a conversation, and they mentioned that nothing has been done at trust level and they want to engage with income generation, my school needs this, I want to get some equipment, can you help me? We have loads of them on board, but actually recently I say, as recent as this year, academies, multi-Academy trusts, trust with more than about five or six schools, so the larger academies, they won't take responsibility for their own academies, funding, income generation, financial future et cetera, because whether it is just ignorance or fact, done at trust level.
1	On the contrary, the trust we are working with right now, they definitely have visionary leadership, he articulates everything about visionary leadership, he will go: okay, we know that the heads need to be and want to be primarily involved in excellence in education, so we are going to strip all of the business management functions out of schools, make them a community facing champions and we at the trust will absolutely take accountability and responsibility for all of that and that is our job.
LC	Is that happening yet?
1	It is absolutely happening. They have got 17 schools in their trust now and want to move it to 40.
LC	How do you think it is going for them, has there been assistance to this?
1	I don't think necessarily resistance, but I think that there has been challenging in terms of the skill levels that they have in place. So people that they wanted to take on the journey with them and who will help lead the management and some of them absolutely have the skills and attributes and talents that are required, but others of them have massively positive attitudes and really desperately wants to help, but they are just overwhelmed by the task of what it one requires because you know, maybe in this particular instance I am thinking of, the lady in question and while she is fantastic and I'm sure very highly contributes as a member of the team who desires to learn every possible occasion, wasn't brought in to run that kind of a function.
LC	So that is really interesting, you have anything to add that, [4]?

4	I think everything has been said and I agree with everything that has been said.
LC	Do you see any other barriers that can get in the way, I get a sense of either structural issues that can sometimes contribute to it, perhaps like experience, historical factors, all these ideas of the buffer that will be protected by the government things fail, do you think there are other barriers that people not to engage in conversation?
4	I think it is just a deep-set attitude that have existed and still do exist within schools that they should have to find their own money and that's in agreement with what has been said but I do sort of see that a fair bit and I think that shows as well in a sort of inexperience of some school business managers or members of schools that we do work with in generating income because they haven't had to do it before so they are not used to it and sometimes don't feel like they should have to, because education should be free and has always been free, so I think it is a huge and in my opinion the main blocker.
1	Isolation has been cited as a very big factor as well. Isolation as I am on my own and I don't have anybody to work with, bounce ideas off and I feel the weight of the responsibility and I know that I am supposed to be doing it but I can't see what it's like, I don't know what I'm supposed to be achieving. Nobody actually says those words but you can tell they don't, because they don't know what it is like to be commercial. They don't know what the is. They were not employed to do that, they were employed to manage a budget with a big lump of money off which they offset the expenditure, rather than turn that on its head and go: okay, we have cut all two pennies on each paperclip box and toilet paper, we now have to think outside this box, it is a very unnatural way that they approach things.
LC	Do you have anything to add, [3]?
3	To add to [4], I think schools are very uncomfortable talking about money because it is not something they ever had to do because they have been funded. While some schools are starting to come to terms that they need to talk about money, they need to understand how to finance themselves, there is still this kind of talking without actually talking about whether you make money or losing money as a the school.
2	For me it is very much like for my customers I speak to it is initially all about mindset, with ties in with what everybody said. It is the case of: okay, I've worked with the school for 30 years, this ties into being reactive as well, nothing has happened yet, you are all now having a conversation with me trying to change my mindset about what to do with the school's finances. In the future, it is very much if I haven't picked up this phone I will be able to go on my nice way and everything will be absolutely fine but I have someone now trying to completely educate me about financial stability of my school over future years. So it is very much mindset, they are out of the comfort zone so if you can appreciate 30 years ago someone started as a School business manager helping in the office, a little bit of first aid et cetera in the playground, now all of a sudden she is expected to go in front of businesses and plead her case for money, knock on doors and shake

	where can, stand up and talk to people about how we need to achieve so much money for a mathematical provision. She's out of the comfort zone and the easy thing to do is to shut the door and walk away and put the head in the sand. So it is definitely mindset for me and being out of the comfort zone.
LC	Interesting because you almost sound as well that certain issues of competency, lack of confidence, would you agree?
4	Yes, not to blow our own trumpet, but I don't think there exist any sort of training then what we offer for school business managers and schools to successfully know how be trained upon successfully generating income because they have never done it before. Competency is indeed a big factor in it as well. It would be great if there was training available, if it would be rolled out nationally for the school business managers and bursars, people working in the schools who are doing that.
2	Yes I agree, part of the consultations I have are very direct at that point, I basically ask the question: do you have the time and do you know what you are doing? Nine times out of 10 they come back and say that they don't have a lot of time and that they don't know what they're doing. So I ask them if they know how to apply for grants, you know how to reach specific people within companies for sponsorship, but they often haven't got a clue and they don't know where to start. So if we would say to them you know, go on your own and do it, it would never happen. It is this education bit that they hardly admit that they need it and is lacking in schools at the moment. They don't know how to target with income generation and obviously it is up to us to help them achieve that. If they were left out on their own, it wouldn't happen.
1	They are completely overwhelmed by
2	They will bury their heads in the sand.
LC	It is interesting, when you talk about what you do, it sounds more like you are a supportive therapeutic counselling role, kind of nurturing and understanding the school business managers. Has that been the case for you?
2	Yes, I think it is the best approach, where I sit on the phone between all face-to-face visits for half an hour to an hour where I have had school business managers cry as I am the sound board for basically all the stress that they have been put under. They have this many hours in the day and they have this much work to do, and when they come and they just add it to the pile. How on earth can I concentrate on generating money, which is the most important thing in the world, when everyone is coming knocking at my door trying to find out what is happening here. So it is very much that sympathy and empathy, it is okay, I understand what is going on, I can't give you more time but this is what it can do and which will help you to speed up this process et cetera. It feels like I am a psychiatrist half the time. It is absolutely great but is it the best approach? I don't think you can knock on someone's door and say to them: I can help you with your funding, are you interested? It is very much the case of: tell me what is happening in your school, tell me what looks like for you, who is involved, what do you envision the next year will look like, what they want to achieve, what do you think this looks like, what do you think that looks like and do you think this might be the

best option for you? That is very much what the consultations are like and that is what schools go through when they speak with us.

Session 3

LC	Based on what you know about gamification techniques, because of course gamification can be anything from leaderboards or a little achievement you get, pop ups on your screen or you might get points, for example a Tesco card is a good example of gamification, the idea of gathering rewards and eventually getting to use it to something. It could be anything from supportive community to forums, discussions, or anything like that. So I was wondering, in your existing body of tools, is there anything that does have that and what is it?
3	Probably nothing. We actually don't have a business leading towards gamification kind of things, mainly because we are still very much focused on the one school business manager in the one organisation but I think school business managers and schools do compete with each other and like to have that kind of competition, we are doing better than these guys in this and this. As well as working here, I am also a governor for a school, very much compete with their other schools around academic achievement and some of the other kind of things and we talk about it quite a lot in meetings, so there is a scope for that but there is nothing we really do around it.
LC	Is there anything you do from a community management point of view, do you have any online tools?
4	We have the community app that they can use first for the projects for which they are raising money for. And we are in the development to further include rewards and stuff like that. At the moment, what it is, is a stand-alone webpage for their particular projects where they raise money for with the opportunity for people to donate to that project
LC	So more like crowdfunding?
4	Yes, more like crowdfunding.
LC	How is that taking hold?
4	Okay. Not as well as we would have likely to do, that is partly because of the unfamiliarity of schools using that sort of thing and
2	We have successfully implemented it, so at the start it was all about trying to understand what they want to achieve, so we have managed to engage with them that far to get enough information, get it on their page, get it out there and then it comes down to: okay, we will help you do some sort of fundraising campaign, we send information out to your existing contacts in order to spread awareness about this page, you need to do some marketing, you need to maximise interest, get donations, sponsorships, and it tends to, at the moment, stop there, but I think it comes down to the education of people because they are out of their comfort zone and they know they need to do this and they got this far because they want to and they understand it's on their school development plan to achieve this, but they can't do it.
LC	Do you think it depends a lot on hand holding?
All	Yes
LC	Do you have any idea how long it takes from first moment of contact until they are actually able to take the first step, as some sort of

	toddlers, into the real world on their own.
1	We did some measurements about actually when we finished the sale with somebody, how many man-hours it was taking to get them set up with their software, choosing the blueprint for the funding application that would be another thing that they could do in the future, getting some stuff in their database, getting their community page out there, we are just doing a bit of an intensive exercise now with a lot of people who got a community page but won't get it out there, and to try and find out why and how we can get them to share it on social media, but at that point, we first clocked up times, it was taken as something ridiculous like about 6 to 8 man-hours and that was only to get a community page up and running. The guys have fine-tuned the process quite a bit since then but there is some resistance to get a community page out there which they yet have to fully understand.
99	When the school would make a community based page and asked me to sign up and donate 5 pounds a month, I would. But I am not going to the school and pay them 5 pounds every month, it is their job to do that and approach me.
3	There has been done research about this and it goes back to the kind of culture around money and people asking for money.
1	Particularly asking parents for money.
3	You will find that a large proportion of parents are more than happy to donate support school projects but the schools won't ask them to do it.
2	Yes, from my perspective, I have got three daughters, and the last two weeks, I have received letters in the school backpacks: can you donate priced at Christmas fair, send your child in blue and give them 5 pounds. So that all has to be done at once. I have to go to the shop and buy a present, I need to find a fiver, I haven't been paid yet, it is that time of the month again, I need to go and buy a blue top, this is all for the school. The day before they asked for a pound for reading club, contributions for this et cetera. So over the course of this two weeks, they asked me for about £20 to donate in several instances. I don't mind giving the school £20, but it would be so much easier for me if they asked me to donate every month. If they asked me to donate £20 a month, I would have no problems making a direct debit and sending it to them, as long as I understand where my £20 a month are going towards. So with this letter, it is the case of give give give give, but I have no idea what it's going towards, because it doesn't cost school 1 pounds to wear my daughter a blue T-shirt, so what are you doing with that pound? I am interested to know what is going to happen. I have had the conversation with the school and I explained that I'm absolutely happy to give this money but do not think if it would be easier to just ask parents for money? Then they respond that they don't want to ask parents for money, but then I responded that they actually just did. And not everybody is capable of just paying £20 when you asked them, but you are at the end of the month when their salary is being paid, it will be much easier for parents to donate money to the school. So to go back to the therapeutic consultation kind of thing, it is just education piece. It is carrying on exactly with what you are doing, but do it in a different way. Continue to ask £20 a month, but structure it so that it is literally

	one payment at the end of the month going straight into your community page towards this project so I know exactly where my money is going, I know when it is coming out and next week I won't get a surprise letter that when I only have 5 pounds left in my bank account that they want £7.50. That is the feedback that probably parents would give to the school which creates the mindset of: we can't ask parents for money because they get irritated by this constant flow of letters.
1	This is exactly what I was going to say. There are two things about that argument. Yes I absolutely hear that a lot about we can't ask them for money but actually we are already asking them for money. That goes back I think to the mindset issue and the competency issue. The competency issue is: we don't know how to position ourselves and we don't even know we need to position ourselves differently, but what I can see is we, the school, are not ready to raise money but friends of the school are, what is that all about? Why are they giving it to them but not to us? Well, it must be because we, the school, can't be asking for money, whereas the friends are seen as a different kind of organisation or charity with some greater communal good. On the back of that, the mindset, which is the culture, which is, if we always do what we have always done, we will always get what we have always got. They know that, I think genuinely probably they would like to do something differently, but they just don't know how.
3	That carries on with asking for a quid on a non-uniform day, but if they even think about asking for a quid for a nonuniform day for their own projects,
1	Because there is not a big enough catalyst to cause something different.
LC	For me as a parent, the school is one of the few places where I still need a cheque book. I always found that amusing. To share a personal anecdote: having gone to high school in America, where it is much more commonly expected and no one even bats an eyelash and they do have organised parent associations that [...] it is auditing that seems to be perpetuated, because we see it in higher education as well, with this apology charging for a fee to students because of course our culture is not used to it yet. Do you agree with your colleagues [4]?
4	Yes.
LC	It's interesting because you all have a, and I think we are winding down now, I think this idea of it sounds as though schools also need to be thinking about parent engagement, do you hear that all when you are talking to them, as far as ways in which to get them involved, be part of the solution, or is that not something that comes up at all in the conversation?
1	I hear them say: yes, they don't engage with us, but I don't know why, we still send them newsletters all the time.
2	Yes, it is part of the conversation piece at the very beginning again, which is: what are you currently doing to generate additional income and if it is: we are trying to talk to the parents or we don't do anything or problem you know, what kind of engagement do you get from the parents in the community, what kind of communications do you have with the parents, how involved are the parents, are they on board, do

	they understand what you want to achieve, et cetera. Just as what [1] said, it is the case of: we do send out a letter, but from a parent's perspective, that letter is in the hands of a three-year-old which is now is screwed up in four sections of triangles in the corner of the lunch bag and you won't find it until open that lunch bag.
99	They always want to engage between 2:15 and 3:00, now actually, the parents that probably got more disposable income are absolutely not going to be available at that time.
1	It is about going away from that, if the grandparents are free at that time, why are we not engaging with them? It might be my parents' parents that come and collect the children from school because they are free at that point in time, but there is no mechanism in place to reach them.
3	It goes back to that kind of skills and culture kind of thing, the majority of schools don't really understand what engagement looks like, because they never had to do anything with it and engagement with parents in schools is the same as the engagement with parents when we were probably kids.
2	One of the things we must not forget though, is that school wants to generate income and they want to involve the community and the parents, but they just don't know how to position themselves to do it successfully.
LC	So you don't feel like there is a lack of will, it is just more the mechanism to get there.
2	Mostly, most of the customers the mindset is the fact that they are being reactive, it is obviously the management structure internally but you have to remember right at the heart of that school, they want to do all of these things, they just don't know how to do it.
LC	If you had a magic wand, with limitless funds, do you think there was a way to transform, maybe funding isn't the right phrase, but if we could stop time and give those time resources, what would be your priority, what would be the first thing you would do?
2	I would give every school the ability to communicate with each other to help each other to raise additional income.
LC	So communication seems to come up here again, so the idea of community and communication.
4	There is certainly strength in collaboration, I think that earlier on when we were talking about some people in schools feeling isolated, you will find that the most successful are the ones who are collaborating with each other, both within school and with other schools.
2	If there is a successful school, rather than competing with the school next door, share knowledge and help them become successful too.
LC	Almost to a healthy and friendly degree, instead of rivalry. There is that as well which can be used to good and.
1	I would try and get a catalyst to change, people need to be sufficiently dissatisfied with the status quo to reach tipping point for change and at the moment I don't think they are, so I would find some way to create a, I think some appetite exists, but when it comes to translating it into what that work really looks like, I think the motivation falls away and they are facing everything else they have got to do and I would try to find that

	motivation factor that would make them make it a priority.
LC	So you would make it a big enough fire?
1	Yes
3	I would expand collaboration from school to school and from school to business, to have a skills transfer from the business sector to schools

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